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Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his ways?—
By taking heed thereto according to thy word.

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THE
"TREE AND ITS FRUITS;

OR, THE
LAST HOURS
OF
INFIDELS AND CHRISTIANS
CONTRASTED.

WRITTEN FOR THE AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION, AND
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P R E F A C E.

THE object of the writer of the following pages, is to present a plain statement of facts, and leave the reader to draw his own inference. It would certainly not be logical to attempt to prove the truth of the Christian religion, by contrasting the death-bed experience of believers, who love the Lord Jesus Christ with that of infidels, who hate Him. We bless God, that the religion of Jesus is based upon a foundation too deep for hell to prevail against it, and that its vindication does not depend upon the comparatively superficial evidence offered in the following pages. But, it is a fact, which appears worthy of being more prominently held up to the view of all whose minds are in any degree interested in the great concerns of eternity, that nearly all

those who have been conspicuous in the ranks of infidelity, have left this world in a tempest of horror and dismay, as though the anathema maranatha, pronounced against all who love not the Lord Jesus, had withered them before their time ; whilst it is notoriously true, that those who meet death with the greatest composure, and who triumph over all his terrors, are the men whose lives have adorned the gospel of God their Saviour.

I am aware, it may be objected on the one hand, that some very wicked men have been known to die without these exhibitions of terror, and, on the other, that some who have been counted *good men* have been greatly distressed in view of their last change. But exceptions in this, as in every other case, only establish the general rule ; and the very fact that such instances are always recorded as matter of surprise, furnishes abundant evidence that they are uniformly considered *exceptions*. It is no *new* thing, however, and need not be

counted a *strange* thing, that unbelievers at times manifest composure in the view of death. David, it is true, was perplexed, when he saw that the "wicked had no bands in their death," but Paul accounts for their indifference. Speaking of those, "who receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved," he says, "and for this cause, God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned that believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness;" and it is a reflection that may well make an infidel tremble, that he may become so hardened as to be given up to judicial credulity, and actually to *believe* that which he now knows to be a *lie*, and die with that lie in his right hand, that he may be damned. And this holds good in the case of those, who, after a life spent in heedless unconcern, speak like saints in their dying hour, and profess the utmost confidence of their final acceptance, without ever having given evidence of a single

clear conviction of sin, or without ever having trembled under a sense of the dreadful guilt of living a whole life in neglect of God.

As to the other objection, that even such as have been counted good men have been known to die in great distress, we think a satisfactory answer can be given. Invariably, when this is the case, either the mind has been impaired with disease, as was the case with the poet Cowper, or else they who have been considered good men, have found that they were not really united to Christ, and their hope at last has proved "like the spider's web, and the giving up of the ghost." "The hypocrite's hope shall perish;" but it is immutably true, that whilst "the wicked is driven away in his wickedness, the righteous hath hope in his death!"

It has been remarked by one, to whose death-bed experience we have just referred, viz.: William Cowper, that "few things are more interesting than death-bed memoirs. They

interest every reader, because they speak of a period at which all must arrive, and afford solid ground of encouragement to survivors to expect the same or similar support and comfort when they come to die,"—and, we may add, they give every reason to survivors to apprehend, that if they imbibe principles which sowed thorns in the dying pillows of their friends, their own temples will be pierced, when they come to lay down their heads upon a bed of death.



THE TREE AND ITS FRUITS.

CHAPTER I.

DYING HOUR OF HOBBS, HUME, GIBBON, AND
REV. ROBERT BOLTON.

THOMAS HOBBS, a celebrated philosopher, of England, was born in 1588, and died in 1679, at the great age of 91 years. It has been affirmed by some that he is falsely charged with professing atheism, but no one has, so far, had the hardihood to maintain that his doctrines, religious and political, have not a most pernicious tendency. Whatever may have been his speculations as to the existence of a God, it is certain, that his veneration for the supreme Being could not have been very deep, as he was often heard to speak sneeringly of God and the Holy Scriptures. If, however, he ever professed to disbelieve the existence of a God,

his conduct convicts him of insincerity, for such was his consciousness of guilt, and the certainty of divine retribution, that he could not bear to be alone; and if his candle happened to go out in the night, he awoke in the greatest terror. The thought of death was insupportable to him; and he shunned all discourse upon the subject, but he could not escape from the overflowing scourge itself, by making lies his refuge, and hiding himself under falsehood. The day came that Hobbes must die; his confidence in that false philosophy, in which he once professed to believe, was not merely *shaken*, it was *destroyed*; and when he found that he could live no longer, he felt constrained to confess that "he was about to take a leap in the dark." Had he told the whole truth, and spoken the language of his heart, he would have said, "*into* the dark—into the blackness of darkness forever!" The Earl of Rochester, after his conversion, confessed, that he and many others of his associates, had imbibed their infidel principles from the writings of this hoary sinner.

DAVID HUME has always been considered, by the enemies of God and his Christ, as one

of the first in the ranks of infidelity. He was an ingenious sophist, and was certainly sincere in his profession of hatred against Christianity ; for he puts all his powers of invention (by no means contemptible) on the rack, in order to furnish him with arguments against the religion of Christ. It would, perhaps, be saying too much to affirm that the writings of Hume have done no injury to the cause of Christ, but, at all events, they have indirectly promoted the very object they were intended to defeat. His deistical treatises called forth masterly vindications of the truth of Christianity from the pens of George Horne, Bishop of Norwich, Beattie, Dr. Campbell, and others, which, so long as time shall last, will prove the futility of the most ingenious and spurious objections against the truth of the Christian religion. It is well worthy of remark, that David Hume, with all his industry, virulence, and characteristic buffoonery, was himself heartily ashamed of the opinions he propagated. In a letter, addressed to Dr. Hugh Blair, when alluding, with every symptom of conscious defeat, to Dr. Campbell's Dissertation, he says : "I could wish your friend had not denominated

me an infidel writer, on account of ten or twelve pages, which seem to him to have that tendency, while I have written so many volumes on history, literature, politics, trade, morals, which, in that particular at least, are entirely inoffensive. Is a man to be called a drunkard because he has been seen fuddled once in his lifetime?"

Poor David Hume! In what an ineffably despicable position does this quotation exhibit the great champion of infidelity, whose praises are in the mouth of every desperate unbeliever! What! David Hume recoil from the denomination of an infidel writer? The man who has employed all his talents and learning in perverting the Old Testament, and invalidating the New; who has hunted up every stale calumny, and devised new falsehoods to affect, if possible, the authenticity of the Pentateuch, and brought up as formidable an array of ingenuity, research, and literary influence as any infidel writer that ever lived, to invalidate the miracles of Christ; shall that man wince when he is called an infidel writer? What then means the application of such language as this to Christianity; "the modern European su-

perstition,"—"the virulent poison,"—"the cruel enemy,"—"the inhuman tyrant," that "chiefly contributes to render life miserable?" Did ever an infidel utter language more bitter against Christianity, than this? And why, if Mr. Hume was not habitually influenced by the intoxicating fumes of infidel vanity, did he write his elaborate defence of adultery, suicide, and every crime which can degrade the human species? It is an important fact, however, with which every infidel ought to be acquainted, that David Hume was ashamed of the very sentiments which he so openly avowed, and so industriously propagated. But let us repair to the chamber in which this wretched man lies stretched upon the bed of death. You read in the expression of his pale, haggard countenance, "there is no hope." What mean those cards? Has David Hume been warning the gambler that the hours slain at the gaming-table will haunt the dying bed? No! HE HAS BEEN PLAYING AT WHIST, until from sheer exhaustion he has fallen back upon his pillow. Death has fastened his iron hand upon him; he strains his glassy eyes to read another line of Lucian's jests, mutters a sad joke about Charon's boat,

and with a forced laugh, and a faint attempt to *whistle*, affects to smother the pangs of despair, whilst, tossed by a tempest of horror and dismay, his soul is required of him.

Dr. Johnson observes upon this impenitent death-bed scene, "Hume owned he had never read the New Testament with attention. Here then was a man who had been at no pains to inquire into the truth of religion, and had continually turned his mind the other way. It was not to be expected that the prospect of death should alter his way of thinking, unless God should send an angel to set him right. He had a vanity in being thought easy."

None but a conscience seared with a hot iron could have been *easy* in such an hour, and none but a fool could have died the death of David Hume. It is not, perhaps, generally known that "Hume died in extreme agony and horror of mind. His nurse, a truly respectable woman, has detailed the dreadful secret, and expressed her fervent desire never to witness such another death-bed scene."—See *Prof. Silliman's Journal in Europe*.

EDWARD GIBBON, the celebrated historian of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,

says, "Hume died the death of a philosopher." This man's opposition to the cause of Christianity was marked by less both of the zeal and subtlety that characterized the attacks of Hume. Whilst the latter wrote as a philosopher, and considered those works which related to morals and religion his *chefs d'œuvre*,⁴ Mr. Gibbon offered to revealed religion only the hostility of the historian and the scholar. The two chapters in his historical work, in which he details the rise and progress of Christianity, give him a name and a place among the infidel writers of his day. The poison is most artfully infused, and so deceitfully disguised and sweetened by honeyed hypocrisy, that the unsuspecting reader almost imperceptibly imbibes the prejudices of the historian. He does not deny the vast and silent agency of the Christian religion, which achieved a domination over mankind, far more powerful than any which the arts of senators and the swords of the Cæsars ever attained; he recognises the superior sublimity of this intellectual empire over mere physical supremacy; but he repeatedly attempts to account for it, by sly implications that the causes of

its success were merely of an ordinary character, and thus depreciates the dignity of its nature, and veils the divinity of its origin.

The man who could admire the mode in which David Hume went to his own place, must have had some congenial feeling for the principles of skepticism in his own soul, and if he could witness the parting struggle of this infidel buffoon, and say, "He died the death of a philosopher," we need not be surprised when we read the following notice of Edward Gibbon's death: "Eager for the continuation of his present existence, having little expectation of any future one, he declared to a friend about twenty-four hours previous to his departure, in a flow of self-gratulation, that he thought himself likely to last ten, twelve, or even twenty years longer," when it was manifest to himself and all around him, that he was within a few hours of his death. Thus, with a lie in his right hand, Edward Gibbon passed to the judgment-seat.

During his short illness he never gave the least intimation of his belief in a future state of existence. It is worthy of remark that among all the numerous volumes that Mr. Gibbon

read, it does not appear that he ever perused any able defence, or judicious explication of the Christian religion. Consult his memoirs and diary written by himself.

In opposition to these heart-sickening scenes, we would present a sketch of the last hours of the Rev. ROBERT BOLTON, a faithful minister of Jesus Christ, well known to the Christian church as the author of a "Treatise on Comforting Afflicted Consciences."

A quartan ague attacked him in the month of September, before his death. The violence of the paroxysms and the weakness with which it was attended, rendered it evident that his life was in great danger. His illness, however, was greatly protracted, and often very painful. During the intermissions of his disorder, he was often heard to exclaim, "O, when will this good hour come? When shall I be dissolved? When shall I be with Christ?" Being told that it would be better for him to depart and to be with Christ, but that it would be more profitable to his people that he should remain, he replied, in the language of David, "If I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and show me both it

and his habitation : but if otherwise ; lo, here I am, let him do what seemeth good unto me.”

2 Sam. xv. 25, 26. He was asked by some one else, if he would not be content to live, if God should grant him life : he replied in language which demonstrates the strength and sincerity of his religious principles, “ I grant that this life is a blessing from God ; neither will I neglect any means that may preserve it. I do greatly desire to submit to the will of God ; but of the two, I INFINITELY DESIRE TO DEPART, AND TO BE WITH CHRIST.” When Thomas Hobbes felt that he could live no longer, his language was, “ So, then, I shall be glad to find a hole at which to creep out of the world.”

Great numbers came to see Mr. Bolton during his last illness. He admitted but few, however, urging as his reason, that he might have the more time for preparation to meet his God. To those who were admitted, he gave earnest and affectionate advice, agreeably to their respective occupations in life. He exhorted the ministers of Jesus Christ to increased faithfulness, and admonished sinners to seek their Saviour without delay, and devote them-

selves to his service. About a week before his death he entreated his wife to bear his dissolution, which he perceived to be at hand, with Christian fortitude. He then addressed his children, reminded them of his oft-repeated counsels, and assured them, "I am persuaded none of you dare think to meet me at the great tribunal in an unconverted state." About two days before his death some of his parishioners coming to watch with him, one of them requested, that as he had discovered to them by doctrine, the excellency of Christ, he would now describe to them for their encouragement what comforts he found in trusting to the Redeemer. "Alas!" said he, "do you look for that of me now, that want breath and power to speak. I have told you enough in my lifetime; but to give you satisfaction, I am, by the wonderful mercies of God, as full of comfort as my heart can hold, and feel nothing in my soul but Christ, with whom I heartily desire to be." The night before he died, he was informed that some of his dearest friends were around him to take their last farewell: he rose up from his bed, and shaking them all by the hand, prayed heartily for them,

and desired them to make sure of heaven ; to bear in mind what he had told them in his ministry, and assured them that the doctrine which he had preached to them for the space of twenty years, was the truth of God. Desiring to be laid down again, he spoke no more till the next morning, when he took leave of his wife and children, and blessed them all ; and that day, in the afternoon, about five o'clock, the 17th of December, 1631, in the sixtieth year of his age, he entered into his heavenly rest.

Let the reader, if tainted with infidelity, contrast the dying declaration of Bolton, " I am, by the wonderful mercies of God, as full of comfort as my heart can hold, and feel nothing in my soul, but Christ, with whom I heartily desire to be," with Hume's sardonic laugh, and ribald jest, or with Gibbon's assumed indifference, or Hobbes's gloomy apprehensions of " the leap in the dark," and say whose death-bed experience he could wish to make his own. Methinks even an infidel must say : " Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

CHAPTER II.

FRANCIS SPIRA, AND JOHN KNOX.

IN 1584, about thirty-eight years after the death of the great apostle of the reformation, FRANCIS SPIRA, then residing in Cittadella, within the territories of Venice, a wealthy lawyer of good reputation, hearing the fame of Luther's opinions, began to search the Scriptures to see whether these things were so. After a careful investigation, becoming convinced that the reformer's views were correct, he espoused them heartily, and became a zealous advocate of Luther's opinions. He first instructed his family, and then endeavoured to interest his friends and acquaintances. This he continued to do for the space of six years, and by that time he had rendered himself extremely obnoxious to the popish clergy, who at length accused him before the pope's legate of introducing dangerous innovations. Spira saw at a glance the dilemma in which his zeal had placed him, and well knew, from the power

and malice of his enemies, that nothing but apostasy could save him from the loss of his family, estate, honours and country.

It cost him a hard struggle to give the lie to his former principles and to his conscience ; but after vacillating for some time, he decided that the pleasures of sin were greater riches than the reproach of Christ, and having repaired to Venice, he thus accosts the legate : “ Having of late years entertained an opinion concerning some articles of the faith, contrary to the orthodox and received judgment of the church, and uttered many things against the authority of the See of Rome, I humbly acknowledge my fault, and errors, and my folly in misleading others. I, therefore, willingly yield myself in all obedience to the Supreme Bishop, never to depart again from the traditions and decrees of the holy see. I am heartily sorry for what is past, and humbly beg pardon for so great an offence.”

The cunning legate, finding Spira so willing to compromise, causes a catalogue of all his alleged errors to be drawn up, together with this confession annexed to it, and enjoins upon the apostate to subscribe his name and go back

to his own town, and there declare his confession; to acknowledge the whole doctrine of the Church of Rome, to be true and holy, and to abjure the opinions of Luther, and all such heretics. To these terms Spira acceded, and prepared to return home. But conscience, which had reeled under the heavy blow it had received, had meanwhile recovered strength, and began to apply its scorpion lash. When he reflected how wickedly he had denied Christ and his gospel, and upon what a sad errand he was bound, he was overwhelmed with shame. It was as though he heard a voice addressing him, "Spira, what dost thou here? Whither goest thou? Hast thou, unhappy man, given in thy recantation to the legate? See thou do not seal it in thine own country. Is eternal life so mean a thing, that this present life may be preferred before it? Doest thou well in preferring wife and children before Christ? Is the praise of men better than the glory of God? Wilt thou give thy soul for this world's goods? Is an inch of time more desirable than eternal wrath is dreadful? Think what Christ endured for thee; shouldest thou not be willing to suffer somewhat for

him? Spira, thou canst not answer for what thou hast already done, yet the gate of mercy is not quite shut. Heap not sin upon sin, lest thou repent when it is too late."

In the utmost distress, Spira arrived at home, and acquainted his friends with what he had done at Venice, and with the promise he had made, frankly stating how he was continually racked by the terrors of God on the one side, and the terrors of the world on the other. They at once advised, and unfortunately persuaded him to fulfil his promise. Accordingly he went to the mayor and offered to make the confession enjoined upon him by the legate. He passed a sleepless night, yet, the next morning, in spite of the cries of his injured conscience, he went into the public congregation, and in the presence of the whole assembly recited his infamous abjuration; after which, he was fined thirty pieces of gold, and at once restored to the possession of his estate and former honours. No sooner had he in this manner consummated his treachery, than he thought he heard these dreadful words: "Thou wicked wretch, thou hast denied me; thou hast renounced the covenant of thy obedience

Thou hast broken thy vow. Hence, apostate ; bear with thee the sentence of thine eternal damnation !" Spira, overwhelmed with terror, fell down in a swoon, and from that time forward, he never found any ease or peace in his mind, but declared that he was bound and crushed by the revenging hand of God ; that he continually heard that dreadful sentence of Christ, the just Judge, against him ; that he was utterly undone ; that he could neither hope for grace, or that Christ should ever intercede for him to the Father. His friends, in great distress on his account, called in the aid of the most able physicians. When they were introduced, "Alas, poor men," said he, "do you think that this disease is to be cured by potions ? Neither plasters nor drugs can ease a soul lying under the wrath of God."

Eminent divines were sent for, but none of their counsels afforded him any relief. His friends left no means untried to induce him to take nourishment, and when entreaties would not prevail, they forcibly poured some into his mouth ; and when thus compelled to swallow food, he broke out in the most bitter lamentations. "O," said he, "that I were at an end ;

O, that I were gone from hence ; will none of you let out this weary soul ?” When asked what he conceived to be the cause of his disease, he ascribed all his misery to that shameful denial of his Master, and related the incidents to which we have referred, with such impassioned vehemence, that the hearers could not but weep and tremble. He was reminded of the promises of Scripture, and of the examples of God’s mercy, which are there recorded, but to all such consoling passages he replied, “ My sins are greater than the mercy of God.” “ No,” was the answer, “ the mercy of God is above all sin ; the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin ; God will have all men to be saved.”

“ He will not have damned reprobates to be saved ; I am one of that number ; I know it ; for I wilfully, against my knowledge, denied Christ, and he will not let me hope.”

“ Did you then believe those doctrines to be true which you denied before the legate ?”

“ I did believe them to be true, when I denied them ; but now I neither believe them, nor the tenets of the Church of Rome. I believe nothing ; I have no faith ; no trust ; no hope.”

They read to him the sufferings of Christ, but when they came to the nailing on the cross, he bade them desist, and tossing up and down, he cried out: "There is no comfort in all this for me."

Some who visited him were so amazed at the violence of his language and gesture, that they said he was possessed of the devil. Spira heard them, and cried out, "You speak the truth; I have a whole legion of devils within me, and they justly torment me, for I have denied Christ!" When asked whether he did not think there were worse pains than those which he then endured, he replied: "Yes, there are far greater pains than those which I now suffer, for the wicked shall rise to the judgment; but they shall not stand in the judgment; yet do I desire nothing more than that I might come to that place, where I may be sure to feel the worst, and to be freed from fear of worse to come!"

He was reminded that God often suffers men to fall into the jaws of despair, and yet raises them up again, and was urged to hope that it might be so with him. To this he solemnly replied, "I tell you, when at Venice,

I first denied and abjured my profession, and as it were, drew up an indenture, the Spirit of God often admonished me; and when, at Cittadella, I did set my seal to this denial of my Master, the Spirit of God often suggested to me, ‘Do not write, Spira, do not seal;’ yet I resisted the Holy Ghost, I did both, and at that very moment I felt a wound inflicted in my very will; so that, though I can say, I *would* believe, yet I cannot say, I *will* believe. I see my damnation, and I know my remedy is only in Christ, yet I will not lay hold on it. Such are the punishments of the damned. They confess, what I confess; they repent of their loss of heaven; they envy the saints in glory, but their remorse does them no good.”

When warned not to believe the lying suggestions of Satan, but rather to give credit to those more able than himself to judge of his condition, his answer was: “Ah! here is the knot! I would that I could believe, but I cannot.” Then he told them with what fearful dreams and visions he was continually harassed. That he saw devils come flocking into his chamber, and about his bed, horrifying him with strange noises; that these were not

fancies, but that he saw them as really as he saw the bystanders, and that, besides these outward terrors, he felt continually a racking torture of mind, and a constant butchery of conscience, which he doubted not were the pangs of the damned in hell. Comfortable texts of Scripture, which were deemed appropriate to his condition, were recited in his hearing, and the infinite mercy of God in Jesus Christ was held up before the despairing apostate, but he interrupted the speaker: "You tell me of God's mercy, but God has cast me off. You tell me of Christ's intercession, I have denied him. You command me to believe, I tell you I cannot; you bring me no comfort; I am not the man you take me for. Do you think I delight in my despair. If I could conceive the least spark of hope of a better estate hereafter, I would not refuse to endure the heaviest wrath of that great God, were it for twenty thousand years, so that I might at length reach the end of that misery, which I now know will be eternal. If those testimonies of Scripture which you recited are true, are not these as true? 'Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I deny before my

Father which is in heaven.' Is not this my case? What says Paul? 'It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, if they shall fall away, to be renewed unto repentance!' What can be more plain against me? When Paul says, 'If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment;' he means me; and Peter points at me and tells me, 'it had been better for me not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after I have known it, to turn from the holy commandment.' My condemnation would have been certain if I had not experimentally known the way of righteousness, and do you not see evidently that I have by my wilful denial of the truth brought upon myself, not only damnation, but worse, if worse can be imagined."

All this while, the tears trickled down his cheeks, and he groaned in anguish intolerable, crying out that his condition was worse than that of Cain and Judas; and calling upon death to take him to his own place. "You

see," said he, "that Scripture fulfilled in me, 'they shall desire death, and it shall fly from them.' " He feared much lest his life should be prolonged, and finding no ease or rest, he often exclaimed, "O! miserable wretch! O! miserable wretch!" and turning to the company, he thus admonished them, "Brethren, look diligently to your lives; make more account of the gifts of God's Spirit than I have done; learn to beware by my misery. Think not that you are assuredly Christians, because you understand something of the gospel; take heed that you grow not secure on that ground. Be constant and immovable in your profession; confess even unto death, if ye be called thereto. He that loves father, mother, brethren, sisters, sons, daughters, &c. more than Christ, is not worthy of him."

A friend objected, "These do not sound like the words of a reprobate." His reply was "I only imitate the rich glutton in the gospel who, though in hell, yet was careful that his brethren should not come to that place of torment!"

Seeing a knife upon a table, he ran toward it and snatched it up, intending to destroy

himself; but his friends interfering, he cried out, "I would that I were above God, for I know that he will have no mercy on me." He lay about eight weeks in this condition, in a continual burning, neither desiring nor receiving any nourishment, but what was forced into his mouth, and without digesting even that; he was worn down to a perfect skeleton; vehemently raging for drink; ever pining, yet afraid to live long; afraid of hell, yet coveting death; in incessant torment, yet his own tormentor; and thus consuming himself with grief and horror, impatience and despair, like a living man in hell, he presented a spectacle of God's justice and power. He died frantic with despair.

This account of Spira's miserable end is compiled from an old work, entitled "A Mirror or Looking-glasse both for Saints and Sinners." A. D. 1671. Let apostates see in the death-bed experience of Spira the reflection of their own. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

The closing scene of the life of the great reformer, JOHN KNOX, will stand out in strong contrast with the miserable end of the apostate

Spira. He "counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ." This was the man whose prevailing power in prayer was more dreaded by Queen Mary, than an army of enemies. Knox was at one time overheard exclaiming, in an agony of prayer in behalf of the cause of truth in his beloved country: "Lord, give me Scotland, or I die!"

John Knox was the son of poor but honest parents. He had the advantage of being instructed by a faithful and competent teacher, under whose direction he made such proficiency in his studies that he was admitted to orders before he had attained the age at which candidates are usually received. The works of Austin were the means of bringing him to the knowledge of the truth, of which he made an honest and zealous profession. This involved him in many trials, and insured him no small share of persecution. Compelled to leave his native country, he took refuge in England, and preached whilst there principally in Berwick and Newcastle. In the beginning of Queen Mary's reign he fled, with other evangelical ministers, to Geneva, and preached with them

to an English congregation, which they collected, until, in 1559, he was called home by the Scottish nobility, who had espoused the doctrines of the Reformation. Knox was then established at Edinburgh, and continued there till his death, not, however, without interruption, as the troubled condition of the country compelled him to leave his charge for a season. He continued preaching when he was so much reduced by sickness that he had to be carried to and from the place of worship. After installing a young man as his successor in the ministry of the church over which he had watched for so many years, and exhorting his beloved people, with more than ordinary pungency, to hold fast the profession of their faith without wavering, he took a last farewell, and was conveyed home to his lodgings by his parishioners, who lingered around the house, manifesting, by their tears, the value they set upon this man of God. That afternoon, he was forced by sickness to take his bed. People of every rank and condition in life crowded to see him; and the Earl of Morton coming with the rest, he thus addressed him: "My lord, God has endowed you with many blessings;

He has given you wisdom, riches, influence, and friends, and is now about to prefer you to the government of this realm. In his name, I charge you to make good use of these talents ; better in time to come, than you have for the time past. In all your actions, seek first the glory of God, and the furtherance of his gospel, and the maintenance of his church and ministry ; and next, be careful of the king, and procure his good, and the welfare of the realm. If you do this, God will be with you and honour you : if you do not, God will deprive you of all these blessings, and your end shall be shame and ignominy." Nine years after, the earl called these words to mind at the time of his execution, and said that " the prediction of John Knox was verified." A day or two before his death, he sent for the pastor, and the elders and deacons of the church. " The time," said he, " is approaching, which I have long thirsted for. I shall soon be relieved of all my cares, and be with my Saviour Christ forever. God is my witness, whom I serve with my Spirit, in the Gospel of his Son, that I have taught nothing but the true and solid doctrine of the gospel, and that the end I

propounded in all my preaching was, to instruct the ignorant, to confirm the weak, to comfort the consciences of those that were humbled under the sense of their sins, and weighed down with fear of God's judgments against the proud and rebellious. I am not ignorant that many have blamed, and yet do blame my too great rigour and severity, but God knows that in my heart I never hated the *persons* of those against whom I thundered the threatenings of the law. I did only hate their sins, and laboured with all my power to gain them to Christ; I spared none of any condition, and I spoke what I said, with a sense of my responsibility to God, who placed me in this ministry, and who I well knew would bring me to account. Now, brethren, for yourselves I have no more to say, but to warn you, that you take heed to the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of Christ which he hath purchased with his own blood." Then turning to Mr. Lawson, the pastor of their church, he said, "My brother, fight a good fight, and do the work of the Lord with courage, and with a willing mind; and God from above

bleſs you, and the church of which you have the charge ; ſo long as it continues in the doctrine of truth, the gates of hell ſhall not prevail." The next day he gave orders that his coffin ſhould be made, and was, as uſual, much in prayer, ever crying, " Come, Lord Jeſus ! ſweet Jeſus, into thy hands do I commend my ſpirit." Being asked if his pain was great, he replied, " That he did not count that a pain, which would be to him the end of all trouble, and the beginning of eternal joys." The evening of his death, having ſlept for ſeveral hours, but with great reſtleſſneſs, frequently ſighing and moaning, he was asked when he awoke, how he found himſelf, and what was the reaſon of his frequent groans : he replied, " In my lifetime, I have been often aſſaulted by Satan, and many times has he caſt my ſins in my teeth, to bring me to deſpair, yet God enabled me to overcome all his temptations ; now, the ſubtle ſerpent has taken another courſe to torment me, and ſeeks to perſuade me that my labours in the miniſtry and the fidelity of my ſervice have merited heaven and immortality ; but bleſſed be God that hath brought to my mind theſe Scriptures : ' What haſt thou, that thou haſt

not received?" and 'not I, but the grace of God in me,' with which the adversary has gone away ashamed; and now I am sure that my battles are at an end, and that without any more pain of body, or trouble of mind, I shall soon exchange this life for a happy immortality." When near his last breath, a friend having prayed, he was asked whether he had heard what was said, "Would God," was his reply, "that you had all heard those words with such an ear and heart as I!" then looking heavenward, he said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," and without a struggle, entered into the joy of his Lord.

When we look upon the countenance of the dying Spira, we are reminded of Jehovah's words: "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." But when we witness the closing scenes of the life of John Knox, "who never feared the face of man," we involuntarily repeat the language of David, "Mark the perfect man and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace."

CHAPTER III.

VOLTAIRE, THE EARL OF CHESTERFIELD, PAUL.

MONS. VOLTAIRE, during a long life, was continually treating the Holy Scriptures with contempt, and endeavouring to spread the poison of infidelity throughout the world. That he was a man of talents and wit cannot be denied, but he wants sound learning; and, in addition to this defect, the disgusting immorality which is seen throughout most of his writings, will forever consign them to infamy.

In his last illness, he sent for Dr. Tronchin, who, when he came, found Voltaire in the greatest agonies, exclaiming, with the utmost horror, "I am abandoned by God and man." He then said, "Doctor, I will give you half of what I am worth, if you will give me six months life." The doctor answered, "Sir, you cannot live six weeks." Voltaire replied,

“Then I shall go to hell, and you will go with me !”

The Abbe Bareul, author of the History of the French Clergy, has given an account of the last days of this hero of modern infidelity, the following translation of which is taken from Simpson's Plea for Religion :

“It was during Voltaire's last visit to Paris, when his triumph was complete, and he had even feared he should die with glory, amidst the acclamations of an infatuated theatre, that he was struck by the hand of Providence and made a very different termination of his career. In the midst of his triumphs, a violent hemorrhage raised apprehensions for his life. D'Alembert, Diderot, and Marmontel (his brethren in the bonds of infidelity) hastened to support his resolution in his last moments, but were only witnesses to their mutual ignominy, as well as his own. Here, let not the historian fear exaggeration. Rage, remorse, reproach, and blasphemy, all accompany and characterize the long agony of the dying atheist. His death, the most terrible ever recorded to have stricken the impious man, will not be denied by his companions in impiety. Their silence

however much they may wish to deny it, is the *least* of those corroborative proofs which might be adduced. Not one of the sophisters has ever dared to mention any sign of resolution or tranquillity given by their chief, during the space of three months, which elapsed from the time he was crowned in the theatre, until his decease.

“Such a silence expresses, how great their humiliation was in his death! It was whilst returning from the theatre, and in the midst of the labours he was resuming in order to acquire fresh applause, that Voltaire was warned that the long career of his impiety was drawing to an end. In spite of all his infidel friends, who flocked around him, in the first day of his illness, he intimated a wish to return to the God whom he had so often blasphemed. He called for the priest; and his danger increasing, he wrote the following note to the Abbe Gualtier :

“ ‘ You had promised me, sir, to come and hear me. I entreat you would take the trouble of calling as soon as possible. [Signed,] VOLTAIRE.

“ ‘ Paris, the 26th Feb. 1778.’

“ A few days after this, he wrote the following declaration, in presence of the same Abbe

Gualtier, the Abbe Mignot, and the Marquis de Villevielle, copied from the minutes deposited with M. Momet, notary at Paris :

“ “ I, the undersigned, declare that for these last four days past, having been afflicted with a vomiting of blood, at the age of eighty-four ; and not having been able to drag myself to the church, the Reverend the Rector of St. Sulpice, having been pleased to add to his good works, that of sending to me the Abbe Gnaltier, a priest, I confessed to him, and if it please God to dispose of me, I die in the Holy Catholic church, in which I was born ; hoping that the Divine mercy will deign to pardon all my faults. If ever I have scandalized the church, I ask pardon of God and the church.

[Signed,] VOLTAIRE

“ “ In presence of the Abbe Mignot, my nephew, and the Marquis de Villevielle, my friend. March 2d, 1778.’ ”

After these two witnesses had signed this declaration, Voltaire added these words, copied from the same minutes : “ The Abbe Gualtier, my confessor, having apprized me, that it was said among a certain set of people, ‘ I should

protest against every thing I did at my death ;' I declare I never made such a speech, and that it is an old jest, attributed long since to many of the learned, more enlightened than I am !”

Was this declaration a fresh instance of his former hypocrisy ? For he had the mean hypocrisy even in the midst of his efforts against Christianity, to receive the sacrament regularly, and to do other acts of religion, merely to be able to deny his infidelity, if accused of it. After the explanations we have seen him give of his exterior acts of religion, might there not be room for doubt ? Be that as it may, there is a public homage paid to that religion in which he declared he meant to die, notwithstanding his having perpetually conspired against it, during his life. This declaration is also signed by that same friend, the Marquis de Villevielle, to whom, eleven years before, Voltaire was wont to write, “ Conceal your march from the enemy in your endeavours to crush the wretch.” It had been customary during many years, for Voltaire to call our blessed Saviour, “ *the wretch* ;” and he vowed that he would crush him. He closes many of his letters to his in-

fidel friends with the same words : “ Crush the wretch !” Voltaire had sent this declaration to the Rector of St. Sulpice, and to the Archbishop of Paris, to know whether it would be sufficient. When the Abbe Gualtier returned with the answer, it was impossible for him to gain admittance to the patient. The conspirators had strained every nerve to hinder their chief from consummating his recantation, and every avenue was closed against the priest, for whom Voltaire had himself sent. The demons haunted every access ; rage succeeds to fury, and fury to rage again, during the remainder of his life. Then it was that D’Alembert, Diderot, and about twenty others of the conspirators, who had beset his apartment, never approached him, but to witness their own ignominy ; and often he would curse them and exclaim : “ Retire ! It is you that have brought me to my present state ! Begone ! I could have done without you all ; but you could not exist without me ! And what a wretched glory have you procured me !” Then would succeed the horrid remembrance of his conspiracy. They could hear him, the prey of anguish and despair, alternately supplicating or blaspheming

that God against whom he had conspired ; and in plaintive accents he would cry out, “ O Christ ! O, Jesus Christ ! ” and then complain that he was abandoned by God and man. The hand which once traced the sentence of an impious and reviling king, seemed, as if in mockery, to write upon the wall, “ Crush ; do crush the wretch ! ” In vain he turned away his head ; the time was coming apace, when he was to appear before the tribunal of Him, whom he had blasphemed ; and his physicians, among whom was M. Tronchin, retire in dismay, and the Marshal de Richelieu flies from the bedside of the dying infidel, declaring that the death of the impious man was too horrible to be witnessed ! A short time after telling Dr. Tronchin, in answer to the surmise that he could not live six weeks, “ I shall go to hell, and you will go with me ! ” Voltaire breathed his last.

Where is the infidel so hardy as to say, “ Let me die the death of Voltaire, and let my last end be like his ? ”

Of all the accounts which are left us of the latter end of those who have passed into the eternal world, many are more horrible, but

few so affecting as that which is given us, by his own pen, of the late accomplished Earl of CHESTERFIELD. It shows us incontestibly what a poor creature man is, notwithstanding the highest polish he can receive, so long as he is destitute of the knowledge and experience of those comforts which true religion yields; and what egregious fools they are who squander away their time in what the world calls pleasure. "I have enjoyed," says this finished character, "all the pleasures of this world, and consequently know their futility; I do not regret their loss. I appraise them at their real value, which in truth, is very low; whereas those who have not experienced, always overrate them. They see only their gay outside, and are dazzled with their glare; but I have been behind the scenes. It is a common notion, and like many common ones, a very false one, that those who have led a life of pleasure and business, can never be easy in retirement; whereas I am persuaded that they are the only people who can, if they have any sense and reflection. They can look back upon what they from knowledge despise; others have always a hankering after what they are not acquainted

with. I look upon all that has passed as one of those romantic dreams which opium commonly occasions ; and I do by no means desire to repeat the nauseous dose, for the sake of the fugitive dream. When I say, that I have no regret, I do not mean that I have no remorse ; for a life either of business or, still more, of pleasure, never was, and never will be, a state of innocence. But God, who knows the strength of human passions, and the weakness of human reason, will, it is to be hoped, rather mercifully pardon, than justly punish, acknowledged errors. I have been as wicked and as vain, though not so wise as Solomon ; but am now at last wise enough to feel and attest the truth of his reflection, that all is vanity and vexation of spirit. This truth is never sufficiently discovered or felt by mere speculation. Experience in this case is necessary for conviction, though perhaps at the expense of some morality. My health is always bad, though sometimes better and sometimes worse ; and my deafness deprives me of the comforts of society, which other people have in their illnesses. This, you must allow, is an unfortunate latter end of my life, and consequently, a

tiresome one ; but I must own, too, that it is a sort of balance to the tumultuous and imaginary pleasures of the former part of it. I consider my present wretched old age as a just compensation for the follies, not to say sins of my youth. At the same time I am thankful that I feel none of those torturing ills, which frequently attend the last stage of life, and I flatter myself that I shall go off quietly, but I am sure with resignation. My stay in this world cannot be long ; God, who placed me here, only knows when he will order me out of it ; but whenever he does, I shall willingly obey his command ; I wait for it, imploring the mercy of my Creator, and deprecating his justice. The best of us must trust to the former and dread the latter. I think I am not afraid of my journey's end ; but will not answer for myself, when the object draws very near, and is very sure. For when one does see death near, let the best or the worst people say what they please, it is a serious consideration. The divine attribute of mercy, which gives us comfort, cannot make us forget, nor ought it, the attribute of justice, which must blend some fears with our hopes. Life is

neither a burden nor a pleasure to me ; but a certain degree of *ennui* necessarily attends that neutral state which makes me very willing to part with it, when He who placed me here thinks fit to call me away. When I reflect, however, upon the poor remainder of my life, I look upon it as a burden that must every day grow heavier and heavier, from the natural progression of physical ills, the usual companions of increasing years.

“ My reason tells me, that I should wish for the end of it ; but instinct, often stronger than reason, and perhaps oftener in the right, makes me take all proper methods to put it off. This innate sentiment alone makes me bear life with patience ! For I assure you I have no further hope, but, on the contrary, many fears from it. None of the primitive anchorites in the Thebais could be more detached from life than I am. I consider it as one who is wholly unconcerned in it, and even when I reflect upon what I have seen, what I have heard, and what I have done myself, I can hardly persuade myself that all that frivolous hurry and bustle, and the pleasures of the world, had any reality, but they seem to have been the dreams of

restless nights. This philosophy, however, I thank God, neither makes me sour nor melancholic; I see the folly and absurdity of mankind without indignation or peevishness. I wish them wiser, and consequently better than they are."

What inward wretchedness does this confession of the "best bred man of his age" betray? The tattered rags of his philosophy prove a poor defence against the frosts of old age, and he shivers with the cold, whilst attempting to make his condition appear comfortable to others. Had he been an old heathen philosopher, who had never heard of Jesus Christ, we should not be so much surprised at the self-complacency, with which he alludes to past "follies;" but when we remember that Chesterfield, with all his honours, learning, wit, and politeness, was a thorough hypocrite, with a heart full of deceit and uncleanness, we cannot but regret that the prospect of speedy retribution and detection did not induce him to lay aside his mask, and throw off his rags, and "buy white raiment, that he might be clothed." His letters have been a pest to the young nobility of England, and have certainly

not tended to elevate the tone of moral feeling among the youth of our own country.

When PAUL stood on the shore of eternity, his language was, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day!" What a contrast between the anticipations of the soldier of Jesus, and that of the worn-out servant of sin!

CHAPTER IV.

A SKETCH OF AN INFIDEL DEATH-BED, BY DR. YOUNG—ANOTHER BY MR. HERVEY—A THIRD BY MR. CUMBERLAND—LAST HOURS OF CLAUDE, ADDISON, AND REV. S. WALKER.

THE following graphic delineation of an infidel death-bed is from the pen of the celebrated Dr. Young. Though the name is fictitious, the scene was real:

"The sad evening before the death of the

noble Altamont, I was with him. No one was there but his physician, and an intimate friend whom he loved, and whom he had ruined. At my coming in, he said, ‘ You and the physician have come too late. I have neither life nor hope. You both aim at miracles. You would raise the dead !’

“ Heaven, I said, was merciful—

“ ‘ Or I could not have been thus guilty. What has it not done to bless and save me ? I have been too strong for Omnipotence ! I plucked down ruin !’ ”

“ I said, ‘ the blessed Redeemer’—

“ ‘ Hold ! hold ! you wound me ! This is the rock on which I split ; I denied his name.’ ”

“ Refusing to hear any thing from me, or take any thing from the physician, he lay silent, as far as sudden darts of pain would permit, till the clock struck ; then with vehemence, ‘ O time ! time ! It is fit thou shouldst thus strike thy murderer to the heart. How art thou fled forever ! A month ! O, for a single week ! I ask not for years ; though an age were too little for the much I have to do.’

“ On my saying, we could not do too much ; that Heaven was a blessed place—

“ ‘So much the worse. ’Tis lost ! ’tis lost !
Heaven is to me the severest part of hell !’

“ ‘Soon after, I proposed prayer.

“ ‘Pray, you that can ! I never prayed ; I cannot pray ; nor need I. Is not Heaven on my side already ? It closes with my conscience. Its severest strokes but second my own.’

“ ‘His friend being much touched, even to tears, at this, (who could forbear ? I could not,) with a most affectionate look, he said, ‘Keep those tears for thyself. I have undone thee. Dost weep for me ? That’s cruel. What can pain me more ?’

“ ‘Here his friend, too much affected, would have left him.

“ ‘No, stay. Thou still mayst hope. Therefore hear me. How madly have I talked ? How madly hast thou listened and believed ? But look on my present state, as a full answer to thee, and to myself. This body is all weakness and pain ; but my soul, as if strung up by torment to greater strength and spirit, is full powerful to reason ; full mighty to suffer. And that which thus triumphs in the jaws of mortality is doubtless immortal. And, as for

a Deity, nothing less than an Almighty could inflict what I feel.'

"I was about to congratulate this passive, involuntary confessor, on his asserting the two prime articles of his creed, extorted by the rack of nature; when he thus, very passionately, said:

"'No, no! let me speak on. I have not long to speak. My much injured friend! my soul, as my body lies in ruins; in scattered fragments of broken thought; remorse for the past throws my thoughts on the future. Worse dread of the future strikes it back on the past. I turn, and turn, and find no ray. Didst thou feel half the mountain that is on me, thou wouldst struggle with the martyr for his sake, and bless Heaven for the flames; that is not an everlasting flame; that is not an unquenchable fire.'

"How were we struck! Yet soon after, still more. With what an eye of distraction, what a face of despair, he cried out:

"'My principles have poisoned my friend; my extravagance has beggared my boy; my unkindness has murdered my wife! And is there another hell? O, thou blasphemed and

indulgent Lord God! Hell itself is a refuge, if it hides me from thy frown.'

"Soon after his understanding failed. His terrified imagination uttered horrors not to be repeated or ever forgotten. And ere the sun arose, the gay, young, noble, ingenious, accomplished, and most wretched Altamont expired."

Mr. HERVEY gives the following description of the death-bed scene of an infidel, of which he was an eyewitness :

"SIR, I was not long since called to visit a poor gentleman, erewhile of the most robust body; and of the gayest temper I ever knew. But when I visited him ; O, how was the glory departed from him ! I found him no more that sprightly and vivacious son of joy which he used to be ; but languishing, pining away, and withering under the chastising hand of God. His limbs feeble and trembling ; his countenance forlorn and ghastly ; and the little breath he had left, sobbed out in sorrowful sighs ! His body hastening apace to the dust, to lodge in the silent grave, the land of darkness and desolation. His soul just going to God, who gave it ; preparing itself to wing

away unto its long home; to enter upon an unchangeable and eternal state. When I was come up into his chamber, and had seated myself on his bed, he first cast a most wistful look upon me, and then began as well as he was able to speak, ‘O, that I had been wise, that I had known this, that I had considered my latter end. Ah! Mr. —, death is knocking at my door; in a few hours more, I shall draw my last gasp; and then judgment; the tremendous judgment! How shall I appear, unprepared as I am, before the all-knowing and omnipotent God? How shall I endure the day of his coming?’

“When I mentioned, among many other things, that strict holiness which he had formerly so slightly esteemed, he replied with a hasty eagerness, ‘O, that holiness is the only thing I now long for. I have not words to tell you how highly I value it; I would gladly part with all my estate, large as it is, or a world to obtain it. Now my benighted eyes are enlightened, I clearly discern the things that are excellent. What is there in the place whither I am going, but God; or what is there to be desired on earth

but religion ?' But, if this God should restore you to health, said I, think you that you should alter your former course ? 'I call heaven and earth to witness,' said he, 'I would labour for holiness, as I shall soon labour for life. As for riches and pleasures, and the appliances of men, I count them as dross and dung, no more to my happiness than the feathers that lie on the floor. O, if the righteous Judge would try me once more ; if he would but relieve, and spare me a little longer ; in what a spirit would I spend the remainder of my days ! I would know no other business, aim at no other end, than perfecting myself in holiness. Whatever contributed to that ; every means of grace ; every opportunity of spiritual improvement should be dearer to me than thousands of gold and silver. But, alas ! why do I amuse myself with fond imaginations ? The best resolutions are now insignificant, because they are too late. The day in which I should have worked is over and gone, and I see a sad horrible night approaching, bringing with it the blackness of darkness forever ! Heretofore—wo is me ! When God called, I refused ; when he invited, I was one of them that made ex-

cuse. Now, therefore, I receive the reward of my deeds ; fearfulness and trembling are come upon me ; I smart, I am in sore anguish already, and yet this is but the beginning of sorrows ! It doth not yet appear what I shall be ; but sure I shall be ruined, undone, and destroyed with an everlasting destruction !”

“ This sad scene, I saw with mine eyes ; these words, and many more equally affecting, I heard with mine ears ; and soon after attended the unhappy gentleman to his tomb.”

We will add another sketch, which comes from an authentic source, and which, like all the death-bed experience of infidelity, tends to show what miserable comforters its principles prove in a dying hour. “ I remember him in the height of his fame, the hero of his party, no man so caressed, followed, and applauded. ‘ He was a *little loose*,’ his friends would own, ‘ in his moral character, but then he was the most honest fellow in the world.’ It was not to be denied that he was ‘ rather free in his notions ; but then he was the best creature living.’ I have seen men of the gravest character wink at his sallies, because he was so pleasant and so well-bred, it was impossible to be angry

with him. Every thing went well with him, and he seemed to be at the summit of human prosperity, when he was suddenly seized with the most alarming symptoms. He was at his country-house, and (which had rarely happened to him) he at that time chanced to be alone; wife or family he had none, and out of the multitude of his friends no one happened to be near him at the time of his attack. A neighbouring physician was called out of bed in the night, to come to him with all haste in this extremity. He found him sitting up in his bed, supported by pillows, his countenance full of horror, his breath struggling as in the article of death, his pulse intermitting, and at times beating with such rapidity, as could hardly be counted. The sick man dismissed the attendants he had about him, and eagerly demanded of the physician, if he thought him in danger. The physician answered that he must fairly tell him he was in imminent danger.—‘How so! how so! do you think me dying?’ He was sorry to say, the symptoms indicated death.—‘Impossible! You must not let me die! I dare not die: O doctor! save me if you can!’

“ ‘Your situation, sir, is such that it is not in mine, or any other man’s art to save you, and I think I should not do my duty, if I gave you any false hope in these moments, which, if I am not mistaken, will not more than suffice to settle any worldly or other concerns which you may have upon your mind.’

“ ‘My mind is full of horror,’ cried the dying man, ‘and I am incapable of preparing it for death.’

“ He now fell into an agony, accompanied with a shower of tears : a cordial was administered, and he revived in a degree, when turning to the physician, who had his fingers upon his pulse, he eagerly demanded of him, if he did not see that blood upon the feet-curtains of his bed. There was none to be seen : the physician answered him, it was nothing but the vapour of his fancy.—‘I see it plainly,’ said the unhappy man, ‘in the shape of a human hand ; I have been visited with a tremendous apparition. As I was lying sleepless in my bed this night, I took up a letter of a deceased friend to dissipate certain thoughts which made me uneasy. I believed him to be a great philosopher. I was converted to his

opinions : persuaded by his arguments and my own experience, that the disorderly affairs of this evil world could not be administered by any wise, just, or providential being ; I had brought myself to think no such being could exist : and that a life, produced by chance, must terminate in annihilation. This is the reasoning of that letter, and such were the thoughts I was revolving in my mind, when the apparition of my dear friend presented itself before me ; and unfolding the curtains of my bed, stood at my feet, looking earnestly upon me for a considerable space of time. My heart sunk within me : for his face was ghastly, full of horror, with an expression of such anguish as I can never describe. His eyes were fixed upon me, and at length, with a mournful motion of his head—" Alas ! alas !" he cried, " we are in a fatal error !" and taking hold of the curtains with his hand, shook them violently and disappeared.—This I protest to you, I both saw and heard ; and, look ! where the print of his hand is left in blood upon the curtains !' "

The infidel survived the relation of this vi-

sion very few hours, and died delirious in great agonies.

Now hear the dying testimony of a believer :—

Monsieur CLAUDE was very distinguished among the Protestants, who were driven out of France by Louis XIV. When he was taken ill, he sent for the senior pastor of the church, to whom, in the presence of all his family, he expressed himself thus :—“ Sir, I was desirous to see you, and to make my dying declaration before you. I am a miserable sinner before God. I most heartily beseech him to show me mercy for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. I hope he will hear ~~my~~ prayer. He has promised to hear the cries of repenting sinners. I adore him for blessing my ministry. It has not been fruitless in his church ; it is an effect of God’s grace : and I adore his providence for it.” After pausing a while, he added, “ I have carefully examined all religions. None appear to me worthy of God, and capable of leading man to happiness, but the Christian religion. It is all found in the Holy Scriptures, the

Word of God. From this, as from a fountain, all religions must be drawn. Scripture is the root, the Protestant religion is the trunk and branches of the tree. It becomes you all to keep steady to it."

About a week before he died, with true patriarchal dignity, he sat up in his bed, and desired an interview with his son and family. "Son," said he, tenderly embracing him, "I am leaving you. The time of my departure is at hand." Silence and sobs, and floods of tears followed, each clasped in the other's arms. The family all came and asked his blessing. "Most willingly," replied he, "will I give it you. My wife," said he, "I have always tenderly loved you. Be not afflicted at my death. The death of the saints is precious in the sight of God. In you I have seen sincere piety, I bless God for it. Be constant in serving him with your whole heart. He will bless you." To his son, who, with an old servant, was kneeling by his mother, he said, among other things, "Son, you have chosen the good part. Perform your office as a good pastor, and God will

bless you. Love and respect your mother. Be mindful of this domestic. Take care she wants nothing as long as she lives. I give you all my blessing." He afterwards said, at several times, "I am so oppressed, that I can attend only to two of the great truths of religion; the mercy of God, and the gracious aids of his Holy Spirit. I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. I rely on the mercy of God, and expect a better life than this." Thus died in the triumphs of faith this venerable servant of God.

The Rev. SAMUEL WALKER, of Truro, in Cornwall, was a devoted servant of Jesus Christ. His excessive labours, however, ruined his constitution, and he died at the age of 48. When his dissolution drew near, after much former darkness, but the most assured confidence in God, he broke out to his nurse in this rapturous expression :

"I have been upon the wings of the cherubim! Heaven has in a manner been opened to me! I shall soon be there." Next day, to a friend who came to see him, he said,

with a joy in his countenance more than words can utter, "O, my friend, had I strength to speak, I could tell you such news as would rejoice your very soul ! I have had such views of heaven ! But I am not able to say more." "The wicked are driven away in their wickedness ; but the righteous hath hope in his death !"

JOSEPH ADDISON, so highly celebrated in English literature, was distinguished for piety no less than for splendid acquirements. His contributions to the *Tatler*, *Guardian*, and *Spectator* are in fact the marrow and pith of those celebrated periodicals ; in the course of these essays appeared the series of papers, afterwards collected, and subsequently often reprinted, under the title of "*Addison's Evidences of the Christian Religion.*"

At the time when he was attacked by the disease which eventuated in his death, he was engaged in preparing a paraphrastic version of the Book of Psalms, and from the beautiful specimen, which he furnished in his version of the 23d Psalm, it must always be matter of regret, that he did not live to complete the work. He died at Holland House, Kensington,

on the 17th of June, 1719, in the forty-ninth year of his age. His complaint was an asthma, aggravated by dropsy. During his lingering decay, he sent for a young nobleman, of very irregular life, and of loose opinions. The young lord with great tenderness requested his friend to impart his last injunctions. Addison's reply was, "I have sent for you, that you may see how a Christian can die." He spoke with difficulty and soon expired.

What effect this impressive scene had upon the nobleman is not known; but he himself died in a short time. It was in allusion to the last moments of this truly great man that Dr. Young wrote—

"He taught us how to live; and, O! too high
A price for knowledge!—taught us how to *die*."

CHAPTER V.

LETTER FROM AN ENGLISH NOBLEMAN ON HIS DEATH-BED, TO AN INTIMATE COMPANION—
LETTER FROM THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM TO DR. BARLOW—LAST HOURS OF MR. JANEWAY.

“DEAR SIR, Before you receive this, my final state will be determined by the Judge of all the earth. In a few days at most, perhaps in a few hours, the inevitable sentence will be passed, that shall raise me to the heights of happiness, or sink me to the depths of misery. While you read these lines, I shall be either groaning under the agonies of absolute despair, or triumphing in fulness of joy.

“It is impossible for me to express the present disposition of my soul; the vast uncertainty I am struggling with! No words can paint the force and vivacity of my apprehensions. Every doubt wears the face of horror, and would perfectly overwhelm me, but for some faint gleams of hope, which dart across the tremendous gloom! What tongue can

utter the anguish of a soul suspended between the extremes of infinite joy and eternal misery? I am throwing my last stake for eternity, and tremble and shudder for the important event.

“ Good God ! How have I employed myself? What enchantment has held me? In what delirium has my life been passed? What have I been doing, while the sun in his race, and the stars in their courses have lent their beams, perhaps only to light me to perdition.

“ I never awaked till now. I have but just commenced the dignity of a rational being. Till this instant, I had a wrong apprehension of every thing in nature. I have pursued shadows and entertained myself with dreams. I have been treasuring up dust, and sporting myself with the wind. I look back upon my past life, and but for some memorials of infamy and guilt, it is all a blank—a perfect vacancy ! I might have grazed with the beasts of the field, or sung with the winged inhabitants of the woods, to much better purpose than any for which I have lived. And, O ! but for some faint hope, a thousand times more blessed had I been, to have slept with the clods of the valley, and never heard the Almighty’s fiat,

nor waked into life at his command! I never had a just apprehension of the solemnity of the part I am to act till now. I have often met death insulting on the hostile plain, and with a stupid boast, defied his terrors; with a courage as brutal as that of the warlike horse, I have rushed into the battle, laughed at the glittering spear, and rejoiced at the sound of the trumpet, nor had a thought of any state beyond the grave, nor the great tribunal to which I must have been summoned. It is this which arms death with all its terrors; else I could still mock at fear, and smile in the face of the gloomy monarch. It is not giving up my breath, it is not being forever insensible, at which I shrink; it is the TERRIBLE HEREAFTER, the SOMETHING BEYOND THE GRAVE at which I recoil. Those great realities which, in the hours of mirth and vanity, I have treated as phantoms, as the idle dreams of superstitious beings; these start forth, and dare me now in their most terrible demonstration. My awakened conscience feels something of that eternal vengeance, I have often defied. To what heights of madness is it possible for human nature to reach? What

extravagance is it to jest with death ! To laugh at damnation ! To sport with eternal chains, and recreate a jovial fancy with the scenes of infernal misery ! Were there no impiety in this kind of mirth, it would be as ill-bred as to entertain a dying friend with the sight of a harlequin, or the rehearsal of a farce. Every thing in nature seems to reproach this levity in human creatures. The whole creation, man excepted, is serious ; man, who has the highest reason to be so, while he has affairs of infinite consequence depending on this short, uncertain duration. A condemned wretch may with as good grace go dancing to his execution, as the greatest part of mankind go on with such a thoughtless gayety to their graves. O, my friend, with what horror do I recall those hours of vanity we have wasted together ! Return, ye lost, neglected moments ! How should I prize you above the eastern treasures ! Let me dwell with hermits ; let me rest on the cold earth ; let me converse in cottages ; may I but once more stand a candidate for an immortal crown, and have my probation for celestial happiness Ye vain grandeurs of a court ! ye sounding

titles and perishing riches ! what do ye *now* signify ? What consolation, what relief can ye give me ?

“I have a splendid passage to the grave ; I die in state, and languish under a gilded canopy ; I am expiring on soft and downy pillows, and am respectfully attended by my servants and physicians ; my dependents sigh ; my sisters weep ; my father bends beneath a load of years and grief ; my lovely wife, pale and silent, conceals her inward anguish ; my friend, who was as my own soul, suppresses his sighs, and leaves me to hide his secret grief. But, O ! which of these will answer my summons at the high tribunal ! Which of them will bail me from the arrest of death ? Who will descend into the dark prison of the grave for me ? Here they all leave me, after having paid a few idle ceremonies to the breathless clay, which perhaps may lie reposed in state, while my soul, my only conscious part, may stand trembling before my Judge. My afflicted friends, it is very probable, with great solemnity, will lay the senseless corpse in a stately monument inscribed with

‘ HERE LIES THE GREAT——’

but could the pale carcase speak, it would soon reply,

‘False marble, where?’

Nothing but poor and sordid dust lies here!’

While some flattering panegyric is pronounced at my interment, I may perhaps be hearing my just condemnation at a superior tribunal; where an unerring verdict may sentence me to everlasting infamy.”

Ye sons and daughters of dissipation, such is the cold comfort that awaits you, when, a few days hence, heart and flesh shall fail, and you will be trembling on the verge of the eternal world.

The following letter, written to Dr. Barlow by GEORGE VILLIERS, Duke of Buckingham, who was the greatest wit and the richest man at the court of Charles II., shows the vanity of those endowments upon which the world sets so high a value, and adds additional testimony to the truth that a sinner on his death-bed without hope in Christ, is of all men most miserable :

“DEAR DOCTOR,—I always looked upon you as a man of true virtue; and know you to be

a person of sound judgment. For, however I may act in opposition to the principles of religion, or the dictates of reason, I can honestly assure you, I had always the highest veneration for both. The world and I may shake hands, for I dare affirm we are heartily weary of each other. O, doctor, what a prodigal have I been of the most valuable of all possessions—time! I have squandered it away with a persuasion it was lasting; and now, when a few days would be worth a hecatomb of worlds, I cannot flatter myself with the prospect of half a dozen hours.

“How despicable is that man who never prays to his God but in the time of his distress! In what manner can he supplicate that Omnipotent Being in his affliction with reverence, whom, in the tide of his prosperity, he never remembered with dread? Do not brand me with infidelity, when I tell you I am almost ashamed to offer up my petitions to the throne of grace; or of imploring that Divine mercy in the next world, which I have so scandalously abused in this. Shall ingratitude to man be looked on as the blackest of crimes, and not ingratitude to God? Shall an insult offered to

the king be looked on in the most offensive light; and yet no notice taken when the King of kings is treated with indignity and disrespect?

“The companions of my former libertinism would scarce believe their eyes, were you to show them this epistle. They would laugh at me as a dreaming enthusiast, or pity me as a timorous wretch, who was shocked at the appearance of futurity. They are more entitled to my pity than my resentment. A future state may very well strike terror into any man, who has not acted well in this life; and he must have an uncommon share of courage indeed, who does not shrink at the presence of God.

“You see, my dear doctor, the apprehensions of death will soon bring the most profligate to a proper use of their understanding. I am haunted by remorse, despised by my acquaintance, and, I fear, forsaken by my God. There is nothing so dangerous, my dear doctor, as extraordinary abilities. I cannot be accused of vanity now, by being sensible that I was once possessed of uncommon qualifications; as I sincerely regret that I was ever blessed with any at all. My rank in life made

these accomplishments still more conspicuous ; and fascinated with the general applause which they procured, I never considered about the proper means by which they should be displayed. Hence, to purchase a smile from a blockhead, whom I despised, I have frequently treated the virtuous with disrespect ; and sported with the holy name of Heaven, to obtain a laugh from a parcel of fools, who were entitled to nothing but my contempt. Your men of wit, my dear doctor, look on themselves as discharged from the duties of religion ; and confine the doctrines of the gospel to people of meaner understandings ; and look on that man to be of a narrow genius who studies to be good. What a pity that the holy writings are not made the criterion of true judgment ! Favour me, my dear doctor, with a visit as soon as possible. Writing to you gives me some ease ; I am of opinion this is the last visit I shall ever solicit from you. My distemper is powerful. Come and pray for the departing spirit of the unhappy BUCKINGHAM."

How true it is that "the way of transgressors is hard." Let us leave these scenes and

contrast with them the triumphant departure of one, who at an early age entered into the joy of his Lord :

The Rev. JOHN JANEWAY was born A. D. 1633, at Tylly, in Hertfordshire, and died in June, 1657, at the age of twenty-four years. He was converted in his nineteenth year, and at the age of twenty was admitted a fellow of King's College in Cambridge. He studied much, prayed much, and laboured much in every way to be of use to mankind, and to promote the honour of his Master. Owing to the weak state of his health, he was never permitted to preach but twice. His disorder, which was of the consumptive kind, increased rapidly upon him, but yet with some intervals of relief. During the greatest part of his sickness, however, he was so filled with love, and peace, and joy, that human language sinks under what he saw and felt. He spoke as one who had been in the third heaven; frequently breaking out into ecstasies of joy and praise. Not a word dropped from his mouth, but it breathed of Christ and heaven. He talked as one who had been with Jesus, and come from the immediate presence of God. At one time

he said, "O, my friends, stand and wonder; come, look upon a dying man and wonder. Was there ever greater kindness? Were there ever more sensible manifestations of rich grace? O, why me, Lord? Why me? Sure this is akin to heaven. And if I were never to enjoy more than this, it were well worth all the torments which men and devils could invent. If this be dying, dying is sweet. Let no Christian ever be afraid of dying; O, death is sweet to me! this bed is soft; Christ's arms, his smiles and visits, sure they would turn hell into heaven! O, that you did but see and feel what I do! Come and behold a dying man, more cheerful than ever you saw any healthful man in the midst of his sweetest enjoyments. O! sirs, worldly pleasures are pitiful, poor, sorry things compared with one glimpse of his glory, which shines so strongly into my soul. O, why should any of you be so sad, when I am so happy?"

About two days before his dissolution he said again, "Praise is now my work, and I shall be engaged in that sweet employment forever. Come, let us lift up our voices in praise. I have nothing else to do; I have done with

prayer and all other ordinances ; I have almost done conversing with mortals. I shall presently be beholding Christ himself, that died for me, and loved me, and washed me in his blood. I shall in a few hours be in eternity, singing the song of Moses, and the song of the Lamb. I shall presently stand upon Mount Zion with an innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, and Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant. I shall hear the voice of much people, and be one amongst them who say, Hallelujah ! salvation, glory, and honour, and power be unto the Lord our God ! Methinks I stand, as it were one foot in heaven, and the other on earth ! Methinks I hear the melody of heaven, and by faith, I see the angels waiting to carry my soul to the bosom of Jesus, and I shall be forever with the Lord in glory ; and who can choose but rejoice in all this ?”

In such a rapturous strain as this he continued, full of praise, full of adoration, full of joy, till at length, with overflowing faith and fervency, he cried aloud, “ Amen ! Amen !” and expired.

CHAPTER VI.

LADY JANE GREY AND ROBESPIERRE.

WE have hitherto contrasted the dying hours of the Christian and the infidel, when both were surrounded by friends, who could sympathize with them whilst convulsed by the death-agony; and we have found infidelity shrinking affrighted and dismayed from the contest, whilst faith in Jesus defies and triumphs over the king of terrors, crying out with holy Paul, "O, death, where is thy sting?" And if, when both believer and unbeliever are attended by those whose sympathy echoes back every groan, extorted by the pangs of the last struggle, and who, like angels of mercy, hover around the dying bed, soothing the sufferer's pain by endearing looks, and words, and attentions; if, when the pillow of both the just and the unjust alike is watered by the tears of a fond wife or mother, who weeps as she witnesses the distress which her kind as-

siduities cannot alleviate ; if, when the hope of the Christian is an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, whilst the expectation of the blasphemer proves like the giving up of the ghost ; let us turn and view them when both are placed in circumstances infinitely more awful and appalling. Let us see how they can meet the last enemy, when he approaches, not with the stealthy advance of consumption, nor with the tardy progress of the wasting fever, but when, in full health, they must walk beside their coffin to the place of sudden and ignominious death ; and find the scaffold surrounded, not by friends, whose tears fall like rain, and whose very countenances bespeak the intensity of their sympathy, but by stern-looking men, whose iron features betray no symptoms of pity or condolence. Let the reader remember the horror and distress of Voltaire and Hume in their last extremity, though they “died upon their bed.” And, if the infidel “do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?” “If thou hast run with the footmen and they have wearied thee, then, how canst thou contend with horses ? And if in the land of peace

wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?"

We will select on the one hand a young woman, nursed in the lap of luxury and refinement, born of noble parentage, and with every attraction thrown around her path that could make life desirable, and see how meekly she can surrender her life to the cruel jealousy of a successful rival; and, on the other, we will choose a man, whose very element was blood, who could look upon the tortures of thousands whom he consigned to the guillotine with cool indifference; and watch his demeanour, when a just Providence sent back his bloody instruments to plague their inventor. The last hours of **LADY JANE GREY** and **ROBESPIERRE** will furnish a strong contrast, and illustrate the power of the gospel in one instance; and in the other, the utter impotence of infidelity to sustain its advocate in the dreadful ordeal through which both were called to pass.

LADY JANE GREY had been persuaded to lend her name and influence to a project notoriously not her own. Upon the death of King Edward the Sixth of England, the Dukes of

Northumberland and Suffolk, in order to secure a continuance of their power, attempted to divert the succession from Mary to Lady Jane Grey. Their scheme proved abortive; and the unfortunate lady was doomed to die by order of her successful competitor. The day appointed for her execution, as well as that of her husband, was the twelfth of February, 1554.

The fatal morning being come, her husband earnestly desired the officers to permit him to take a last farewell of her; the request was cheerfully granted, but Lady Jane being advised of his intention, dissuaded him from it, assuring him by letter, "that such a meeting would rather add to his afflictions, than increase that quiet wherewith they had possessed their souls for the stroke of death; that he demanded a lenitude which would put fire into the wound, and that it was to be feared her presence would rather weaken than strengthen him; that, if his soul were not firm and settled, she could not compose it by her eyes, nor confirm it by her words; that he would do well to remit this interview to the other world; that there friendships were happy and union indissoluble, and that their's would be eternal, if

they carried nothing terrestrial with them to hinder their rejoicing."

She expressed great tenderness when she saw her husband led out to die, but soon overcame it when she considered how closely she was to follow him ; all she could do was to bid him farewell out of the window as he passed toward the place of his execution, which he suffered on a scaffold on Tower-hill, with Christian meekness. His dead body being laid in a car, and his head wrapped up in a linen cloth, were carried to the chapel within the Tower, in the way to which they were to pass under the window of the Lady Jane. She looked upon the sad spectacle with a degree of fortitude that was surprising. Soon after, she was led out by the lieutenant of the Tower to the scaffold that was prepared upon the green, over against the White Tower, attended by Mr. Feckenham, a Popish priest. She saluted those who were present with a countenance perfectly composed ; then taking her leave of Mr. Feckenham, she said, " God will abundantly requite you, good sir, for your humanity to me, though your discourses gave me more uneasiness than all the terrors of my

approaching death." After this she addressed the spectators, as follows :

“ My lords, and you, good Christian people which come to see me die, I am under a law, and by that law, as a never-erring judge, I am condemned to die ; not for any thing I have offended the queen’s majesty, for I will wash my hands guiltless thereof, and deliver to my God a soul as pure from such trespass, as innocence from injustice, but only because I consented to a thing to which I was forced, constraint making the law believe I did that, which I never intended. Notwithstanding I have offended Almighty God in that I have too much followed the lust of my own flesh, and the pleasures of this wretched world ; neither have I lived according to the knowledge that God hath given me ; for which cause God hath appointed to me this kind of death, and that most worthily according to my deserts. Howbeit, I thank him heartily that he hath given me time to repent of my sins, here in this world, and to reconcile myself to my Redeemer, whom my former vanities has in a great measure displeased. Wherefore, my lords, and all you good Christian people, I most earnestly

desire you all to pray with me and for me, while I am yet alive, that God of his infinite goodness and mercy will forgive my sins, how numberless and grievous soever against him ; and I beseech you all to bear me witness that I here die a true Christian woman, professing and avouching from my soul that I trust to be saved by the blood, passion, and merits of Jesus Christ, my Saviour only, and by no other means ; casting far behind me all the works and merits of mine own actions, as things so short of the true duty I owe, that I tremble to think how much they may stand up against me."

Having delivered this speech, she kneeled down, and repeated the 51st Psalm in a most devout manner, from beginning to end ; after which, she stood up, and gave her gloves and handkerchief to her attendants, Mrs. Tilney, and Mrs. Helen, and her prayer-book to Sir John Bridges. When adjusting her dress, the executioner offered to assist her, but she declined his help, and turning to her women, desired them to remove her gown, which they did, and gave her a handkerchief to bind about her eyes. The executioner kneeling down, requested her forgiveness, which she most

willingly gave him. Upon this, he desired her to stand upon the straw, which bringing her within sight of the block, she said, "I pray, despatch me quickly." Then kneeling down, she asked, "Will you take it off before I lay me down?" To which he replied, "No, madam." She then tied her handkerchief about her eyes, and feeling for the block, said, "What shall I do? Where is it?" Upon which one of the bystanders guiding her to it, she laid her head down upon the block, and then stretched herself forward, and said, "Lord, into thine hands I commend my spirit;" and immediately her head was severed at one blow from her body.

There are few names in history, with which greater atrocities are associated, than with the name of ROBESPIERRE. He was a low-born and low-minded tyrant; and it does appear as though a righteous God had, in the exercise of vengeance, permitted the nation, which as such had denied his authority, overthrown his altars, and derided his worship, to be ruled by a wretch, who had not one single trait of character that could command the honest respect even of an infidel. He was a vile blasphemer,

and not only were the most atrocious insults to the Supreme Being expressed in language too horrible to repeat, but the most awful blasphemies were acted out, under his auspices. For years he had been familiar with scenes of blood and cruelty; thousands were sent to the scaffold for no other crime than because they were objects of his fear; until, at length, the partners of his guilt were constrained in self-defence to destroy the tyrant. The tempest which hurled Robespierre from the pinnacle of power to which he had climbed, burst suddenly upon him, and gave him no time to provide for his escape. He was denounced and outlawed, and sentenced to the guillotine together with several of the most notorious of his accomplices. They took refuge in the City-hall.

The deputies commissioned for the purpose read the decree of the assembly to those whom they found assembled in front of the building, and they shrunk from the attempt of defending it: some joining the assailants; others laying down their arms and dispersing. Meantime the deserted group, within, conducted themselves like scorpions, which, when surrounded by a

circle of fire, are said to turn their stings on each other, and on themselves. Mutual and ferocious upbraiding took place among these miserable men. "Wretch, were these the means you promised to furnish?" said Payan to Henriot, whom he found intoxicated and incapable of resolution or exertion; and seizing on him as he spoke, he precipitated the revolutionary general from a window. Henriot survived the fall only to drag himself into a drain, in which he was afterwards discovered, and brought out to execution. The younger Robespierre threw himself from the window, but did not perish on the spot. It seemed as if even the melancholy fate of suicide, the last refuge of guilt and despair, was denied to men who had so long refused every species of mercy to their fellow-creatures; Le Bas alone had calmness enough to dispatch himself with a pistol shot. Saint Just, after imploring his comrades to kill him, attempted his own life with an irresolute hand and failed.

Couthon lay beneath the table, brandishing a knife, with which he repeatedly wounded his bosom, without daring to add force enough to reach his heart. Their chief, Robespierre,

in an unsuccessful attempt to shoot himself, had inflicted a horrible fracture on his under-jaw. In this situation, they were found like wolves in their lair, foul with blood, mutilated, despairing, and yet not able to die. Robespierre lay on a table in an ante-room, his head supported by a deal-box, and his hideous countenance half-hidden by a bloody and dirty cloth, bound round the shattered chin.

The captives were carried in triumph to the convention, who, without admitting them to the bar, ordered them, as outlaws, for instant execution. As the fatal cars passed to the guillotine, those who filled them, but especially Robespierre, were overwhelmed with execrations from the friends and relatives of victims whom he had sent on the same melancholy road. The nature of his previous wound, from which the cloth had never been removed till the executioner tore it off, added to the torture of the sufferer. The shattered jaw dropped, and the wretch yelled aloud, to the horror of the spectators. A cast taken from that dreadful head was long exhibited in different nations of Europe, and appalled the

spectator by its ugliness, and the mixture of fiendish expression with that of bodily agony.

Now, why all this distress if these worshippers of the goddess of Reason believed they had nothing to fear from a judgment to come? If death were a perpetual sleep, as they professed to believe, why not meet their fate with a composure at least equal to that with which the youthful, tender Jane Grey, yielded up her life? Solomon answers the question: "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness; but the righteous hath hope in his death."

CHAPTER VII.

TRIUMPHS OF FAITH—MARTYRS.

IN all ages the last words of dying Christians have been much observed, especially when called to witness their confession of Jesus at the stake or on the scaffold, in times when Satan's chain has been loosed or lengthened.

Faith in Jesus has enabled them to sing in the midst of flames; and, with everlasting joy upon their head, to go home as conquerors, whilst men and devils have gnashed upon them with their teeth.

As the Prince of Martyrs, we name the LORD JESUS CHRIST. All who have been baptized with his baptism, and who have loved and followed the Saviour unto death, have owed all the grace and strength with which they were endowed to the merits of the Saviour. From his strength they borrowed strength. It should never be forgotten that the death of the dear Redeemer was very different from that of any of the martyrs. They found death

already disarmed of its sting; his was the task of disarming it. When about to be led out as a lamb to the slaughter, how sweetly did he comfort his disciples. In the xiv., xv., xvi., and xvii. chapters of John, we find the richest consolation which can be afforded to a dying believer. If we examine the history of his sufferings, we read expressions of unwavering faith in God; his confidence in his heavenly Father could not be shaken. His patience under the most poignant sufferings has furnished the original which all have copied who have "filled up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." His pity for his enemies has taught his followers to pray for those who persecuted them unto death, and the first martyr, Stephen, could not fall asleep until he had asked, in behalf of those who were stoning him, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." The bright pattern of filial affection which the Saviour left, by pausing when in the agony of death to make provision for the temporal support of his mother, has inculcated a lesson, which no Christian can forget. His ardent love for his disciples shows that he practised love as well as preached it. His concern for

his Father's glory, his obedience unto death, and his willingness to be offered, all teach the followers of Jesus, like him, to pray, "Father, not as I will, but as thou wilt." The blessed Sun of Righteousness shone forth gloriously at his setting; and the beams of heavenly grace have shed such lustre about the cross, that dying saints have ever found its shadow the dawn of glory.

1. When old POLYCARP came to the stake at which he was to be burned he desired to stand untied, saying, "Let me alone, for he that gave me strength to come to the fire, will give me patience to endure the flame without your tying."

2. So holy CYPRIAN triumphed over death, saying, "Let him only fear death, who must pass from this death to second death." When he had listened to the sentence pronounced against him, he said, "I thank God for freeing me from the prison of this body."

3. IGNATIUS, being led from Syria to Rome, to be torn in pieces of wild beasts, expressed his fear, lest it should happen to him as some others, that the lions out of a kind of reverence

would not dare to touch him ; and therefore he often wished “ that their appetites might be whetted to despatch him. “ For,” said he, “ the lions’ teeth are but like a mill, which, though it bruises, does not waste the good wheat, but only prepares and fits it to be made pure bread.” His wish was granted ; he was devoured by the lions.

4. Mrs. JANE ASKEW, who was a martyr in King Henry’s time, thus subscribed her confession in Newgate : “ Written by me, Jane Askew, that neither wisheth death, nor feareth its might, and as merry as one bound for heaven.” When the chancellor sent a letter to her at the stake, offering her the king’s pardon if she would recant ; she refused to look at it, saying, that “ she had not come thither to deny her Lord and Master.”

5. JAMES BAINHAM, when at the stake in the midst of the burning fire, which had half consumed his legs and arms, spoke these words : “ Behold, ye look for miracles, and here now ye may see a miracle ; for in this fire I feel no more pain than if I were on a bed of down ; it is to me as a bed of roses.”

6. JOHN LAMBERT, as he was burning in Smithfield, whilst his legs were quite consumed with the fire, lifted up his hands, his fingers flaming like torches, but his heart abounding with comfort, and cried out, "None but Christ; none but Christ!"

7. MRS. JOYCE LEWIS being condemned to be burned in Queen Mary's reign, when she heard that the writ for her execution was come, said to her friends, "As for death, I fear it not; for, when I behold the lovely countenance of Jesus Christ, my dear Saviour, the ugly face of death doth not much trouble me."

8. JOHN BRADFORD, a minister and martyr in Queen Mary's reign, when told by the keeper that he was to be burned next day in Smithfield, put off his cap, and lifting up his eyes to heaven, said, "I thank God for it: it comes not now to me on a sudden, but as a thing waited for every day and hour; the Lord make me worthy of it." One Creswell offering to interpose for him, and desiring to know what his request was; he said, "I have no request to make: if the queen give me life, I will thank her; if she will banish me, I will thank her; if she will burn me, I will thank

her; if she will condemn me to perpetual imprisonment, I will thank her."

The chancellor pressing him to do as others had done, in hope of the queen's mercy, he said, "My lord, I desire mercy with God's mercy; that is, without doing or saying any thing against God and his truth. But mercy with God's wrath, keep me from. God's mercy I desire, and would also be glad of the queen's favour, to live as a subject without any clog on conscience; but otherwise the Lord's mercy is better to me than life." In his letter to Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer, he had these words, "Our dear brother Rogers hath broken the ice valiantly. This day, or to-morrow at the utmost, hearty Hooper, sincere Saunders, and trusty Taylor will end their course, and receive their crown. The next am I, who hourly look for the porter to open to me the gates after them to enter into the desired rest. O, what am I, Lord, that thou shouldst magnify me? Is it thy will to send for such a wretched hypocrite in a fiery chariot, as thou didst send for Elias?"

In his letter to Mrs. Ann Warcup he said, "My staff standeth at the door. I look con-

tinually for the sheriff to come for me : and I bless God I am ready for him. Now I go to practise that which I have preached ; now I am climbing up the hill ; it will cause me to puff and blow before I come to the cliff. The hill is steep and high, my breath is short, and my strength is feeble ; O ! pray to the Lord for me, that, as I have now, through his goodness, even almost reached the summit, I may, by his grace, be strengthened, not to rest until I come where I should be."

The fiery chariot came when it was expected, and John Bradford went home in it.

9. When JEROME of Prague was fastened to the stake, and the executioner began to kindle the fire behind him, he bade him kindle it before his face, " For," said he, " if I had been afraid of it, I need not have come to this place, having had so many opportunities offered me to escape it."

10. CHRISTOPHER LOVE, minister of Lawrence-Jury in London, who was beheaded on Tower-hill, Aug. 22, 1651, in the time of Cromwell's usurpation, on the charge of having plotted against the government, spoke as follows, when brought to the scaffold. " Although

there is little between me and death, yet, this bears up my heart, there is little between me and heaven. It comforted Dr. Taylor, the martyr when he was going to execution, that there were but two stiles between him and his Father's house, there is a shorter distance between me and my Father's house, but two steps between me and glory. It is but lying down on that block, and I shall ascend upon a throne. I this day pass through the *Red Sea* to the promised land. Methinks I hear God say, as he did to Moses, 'Go up to mount Nebo and die there:' so, to me, Go up to Tower-hill and die there. Isaac said of himself that he was old, and yet he knew not the day of his death: but I cannot say so; I am young, and yet I know the day of my death, and I know the kind of my death, and the place of my death also. Two famous preachers of the gospel died this death before me. John the Baptist, and Paul the apostle, they were both beheaded. I read also in Rev. xx. 4, The saints were beheaded for the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus. Some suppose that I suffer not for the word of God, or for conscience, but for meddling with State

matters. To this, I shall briefly say, it is an old trick of Satan to impute the cause of God's people's sufferings to their plotting against the State; when, in truth, it is their religion and conscience for which they are persecuted. The rulers of Israel would have put Jeremiah to death on such a charge, and so Paul had well nigh been put to death as a mover of sedition, when his only crime was preaching Jesus and him crucified. It is pretended that my life is forfeited on account of civil matters, whereas, it is because I pursue my covenant, and will not prostitute my principles and conscience to the ambition and lust of men. I had rather die a covenant-keeper, than live a covenant-breaker. Behold, I am this day making a double exchange. I am changing a pulpit for a scaffold, and a scaffold for a throne; and I might add a third: I am changing the presence of this numerous multitude on Tower-hill, for the innumerable company of saints and angels in heaven, the holy hill of Zion; and I am changing a guard of soldiers for a guard of angels, which will receive me and carry me to Abraham's bosom. This scaffold is the best pulpit that I ever preached in. In

my church pulpit, God, through his grace, made me an instrument to bring *others* to heaven : but in this pulpit, he will bring me to heaven. Formerly I have been under a spirit of bondage, yea, sometimes, I have had more fear in drawing out a tooth, than now I have for cutting off my head. When fear was upon me, death was not near ; now, when death is near, my fear is gone. I am comforted in this, though men kill me, they cannot damn me ; though they thrust me out of the world, yet they cannot shut me out of heaven. When I have shed my blood, I expect the full declaration of the remission of sins through the blood of Jesus Christ. I am going to my long home, and you to your short home ; but I shall be at my home before you reach your's." He then prayed that, " seeing he was called to do the work he never did, he might have the strength which he never had," and meekly bowed his head to the executioner's axe.

11. Mr. HAWKS having been requested by his friends, that in the midst of the flames, in which he was to die, he would show them some token, if he could, that the fire was not so intolerable, but a man might keep his mind

quiet and patient if stayed upon God, consented to do so, and promised that if the support he experienced should surpass the pain, he would lift up his hands above his head before he died. After he had offered a fervent prayer, and had been bound to the stake, the faggots were lighted. When deprived of speech by the flame, whilst his skin was drawn together, and his fingers were blazing in the fire, so that all supposed him to be dead; he, mindful of his promise, suddenly lifted up his flaming hands, and clapped them three times together, which was received with a shout from the spectators, especially those who knew the meaning of the gesture. The blessed martyr, presently sinking down into the fire, gave up his spirit to God.

12. RIDLEY was condemned to be burned as a heretic, on October 1, 1555. He prepared himself for his approaching death, which a good conscience enabled him to regard as a matter of joy and triumph. He called it his marriage; and in the evening preceding his execution, was as cheerful as ever.

His brother offered to watch all night with him, but he would not suffer him, saying,

“that he minded, God willing, to go to bed, and to sleep as quietly that night, as ever he did in his life.” When he arrived at the place of execution, he earnestly lifted up his hands and eyes to heaven, till he saw, shortly after, LATIMER descending to the spot; upon which, with a most cheerful countenance, he ran to him, embraced and kissed him, and comforted him, saying, “Be of good heart, brother, for God will either assuage the fury of the flame, or else strengthen us to abide it.” Then, moving to the stake, he kneeled down and prayed earnestly, as did Latimer likewise. Dr. Marshall urged him to recant, saying, “If you will not do so, then there is no remedy, but you must suffer for your deserts.” “Well,” replied the noble martyr, “so long as the breath is in my body, I will never deny my Lord Christ, and his known truth. God’s will be done in me.” The fire being applied, when RIDLEY saw it flaming up towards him, he cried with a loud voice, “Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit; O Lord, receive my spirit.”

13. CRANMER having, like Ridley, consented to the measures for placing Lady Jane Grey

on the throne, became one of the victims of Mary's revenge, after her accession to the throne. Lured by the promise not only of pardon, but of royal favour, he was induced to sign six papers, in which he recanted his Protestant principles, and avowed his sorrow for having entertained them.

In spite, however, of the promises made to him, he was brought to the stake, March 21, 1556. He had by this time recovered his firmness, and he died with the utmost fortitude, holding in the flame, till it was consumed, the hand which had signed the recantation, and exclaiming, "This unworthy hand! this unworthy hand!"

14. JOHN HUSS having peremptorily refused to recant the opinions which are now held in the Reformed Churches, but which Papists condemn as heretical, was, on the 7th of July, 1415, censured for being obstinate and incorrigible. And it was farther ordered by the Council that he should be degraded from the priesthood, his books publicly burned, and himself delivered to the secular power. This sentence he heard without emotion. He immediately prayed for the pardon of his ene

mies. The bishops appointed by the council stripped him of his priestly garments, and put a mitre of paper on his head, on which devils were painted with this inscription,—“A ring-leader of heretics.” The bishops delivered him to the emperor, and he delivered him to the Duke of Bavaria. His books were burned at the gate of the church, and he was led to the suburbs to be burned alive. Prior to his execution, he made a solemn, public appeal to God, from the judgment of the pope and council, which was fervent and energetic. He was then surrounded with fagots, his mind all the while composed and happy. The flames were then applied to the wood, when the martyr sang a hymn, with so loud and cheerful a voice, that he was distinctly heard above all the roaring of the flames and the murmurs and noise of the multitude. At last he uttered, “Jesus Christ, thou Son of the living God, have mercy on me !” And thus he was consumed ; after which his ashes were carefully collected, and cast into the Rhine.

God will raise up these precious martyrs at the last day, and they shall be gathered as sweet and pleasant fruit to the praise of the Master's name.

CHAPTER VIII.

TRIUMPHS OF FAITH—THE JOY OF BELIEVERS
IN THEIR LAST HOURS.

WHY has God so ordered it, that we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, if it be not to confirm and establish others in the faith, and to excite them to imitate those shining lights, when they are about to be swallowed up in the brightness of the sun of glory? Thus the apostle improves their example: "And we desire that every one of you do the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end, that ye be not slothful, but followers of them who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises."

Let us begin with a few of the instances recorded in the Bible:

When JACOB was on his death-bed, he called his sons, and gave to each a special charge and his blessing. How sweetly does he speak of the Messiah's coming: "I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord;" and how affectionately he

commends God's goodness and kind providence towards him through life : " the God which fed me all my life long unto this day," &c.

When JOSEPH was dying, he spoke with the utmost tenderness to his brethren, who had dealt cruelly with him, and assured them of the Lord's faithfulness in keeping his promise to their fathers. " I die, and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land."

When MOSES was about going up to Mount Nebo to die there, he left his blessing and his solemn charge to the children of Israel, and, with his latest breath, glorified God as " the Rock, whose work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment; a God of truth, and without iniquity; just and right is he."

JOSHUA, when near his end, exhorted the people to be faithful to their covenant God, and appeals to their own consciences and experience for the truth of his dying testimony, that God had dealt very graciously with Israel. " Behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth, and you know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you."

When DAVID was warned that the time of his departure was at hand, he assembled the people, and solemnly charged them, as in the audience of God, to keep his commandments. His son and successor Solomon he particularly admonished to “know the God of his father, and to serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind.”

The apostle PAUL, when warned by the Holy Ghost that they of Ephesus, among whom he had gone preaching the kingdom of God, should see his face no more, admonishes the elders of the church to “take heed to themselves, and the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers;” and in view of approaching death, he says triumphantly, “I am now ready to be offered; and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”

The people of the Lord have ever felt it to be their duty to edify, as far as possible, all who

might visit them in their last moments ; and the same rich consolation which sustained Jacob, and David, and Paul, when their last hour of trial had come, has always been found sufficient for those who, like them, loved and waited for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Dr. GOUGE, when old and dying, was greatly afflicted with the stone, and other painful diseases ; yet, though by reason of his pains he was often heard to groan, he never once complained as though the dispensation of God was too severe. He never cried out, “ A great sufferer,” but often, “ A great sinner ;” and comforted himself, that there is a great Saviour. In his greatest torments he would say, “ Well, yet in all these, there is nothing of hell, or of God’s wrath. O, my soul, be silent, be patient ; it is thy God and Father that thus orders thy estate. Thou art his clay ; he may tread and trample on thee as he pleases ; thou hast deserved much more. It is enough that thou art kept out of hell ; though thy pains be grievous, yet they are not intolerable ; thy God affords some intermissions ; he will turn them to thy good, and at length put an end to them all.” When any of his friends attempted to comfort

him by reminding him of his eminent gifts and service in the ministry, he would answer, "I dare not think of any such thing for comfort; only Jesus Christ, and what he has done and endured, is the ground of my sure comfort."

Another man of God under similar pains, when asked how he did, would answer, "The bush always burning, but not consumed; though my pains are above the strength of nature, yet they are not above the supports of grace." He would pray, "Lord, drop comfort into these bitter waters of Marah. Let the blood of sprinkling which extinguisheth the fire of thine anger, allay my burning pain. O, if my patience were more, my pains would be less. Lord, give me patience, and inflict what thou wilt. This is a fiery chariot, but it will carry me to heaven. O, my God, break open the prison door, and set my poor captive soul free. I desire to be dissolved, but help me willingly to wait thy time."

Mr. JOHN DOD had so violent a fever, that there was but little hope of his life; yet at length his physician, coming to him, said, "Now I have hope of your recovery." His answer was, "You think to comfort me with

this, but you make my heart sad. It is as if you should tell one, who had been sore weather-beaten at sea, and conceiving he was now arrived at the haven where his soul longed to be, that he must go back again to be tossed with new winds and waves." He would often say in his last sickness, "I am not afraid to look death in the face. I can say, 'Death! where is thy sting?' Death cannot hurt me."

JOHN HOLLAND, a godly minister, continued his usual practice of expounding the Scripture in his family to the last; and the day before his death, he called for the Bible, and causing another to read the 8th chapter of Romans, he discoursed upon it verse by verse; but on a sudden, he said, "O, stay your reading; what a brightness is this I see! Have you lighted up any candles?" A bystander said, "No, it is the sunshine." "Sunshine," said he; "Nay, it is my Saviour's shine. Now farewell, world; welcome, heaven; the day-star from on high hath visited my heart; O, speak it when I am gone, and preach it at my funeral! God dealeth familiarly with man; I feel his mercy, I see his majesty; whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth;

but I see things that are unutterable." And in this rapture he continued till he died.

We read of an eminently godly man; who fell into such ecstasies of rapture before his death, as his bodily strength and spirit were not able to sustain. Sometimes the manifestations of God's love to his soul were too big for utterance; but when he was able to express himself, his words were so sweet and ravishing concerning the love of Christ and the freeness of grace, that those who heard were melted into tears. Ministers who visited him were often constrained to turn all their prayers in his behalf into praises, except some petitions they would put up to God "that he might graciously spare and be tender of his weak body, and help him bear that load of loving-kindness God was pleased to manifest to him." Sometimes he would cry abruptly, "O angels, help me to praise him! O saints, admire his love, and wonder at him! O flames of love! My soul sees Christ! The heavens open! I see a throne, and the Lamb in the midst of the throne! O! my soul breathes towards him. What am I, a vile worm, that he should be so kind and condescending, as to discover Christ

and heaven in such a manner to me, and assure me that I shall shortly be with him. O! help me to praise him!" When death drew near, there was some alteration in his case, yet he never questioned his interest in Christ; but still asserted, "I know he is my God and Redeemer, and I shall soon be with him." And once, when he was ready to complain for want of God's wonted manifestations, he said, the Lord knew his body was now weak, and could not bear what he had formerly been blessed with, "yet," said he, "glory to his name, he has given me three blinks, since my last illness began!"

Dr. HARRIS, President of Trinity College in Oxford, in his last sickness, used to exhort all about him to get faith above all things. "It is," said he, "your victory, your peace, your life, your crown, and your chief piece of spiritual armour. Howbeit, get on all other pieces, and go forth in the Lord's might, stand to the fight, and thy issue shall be glorious. Only forget not to call in the help of your General; do all for him, and under him." On being told that he might take much comfort in his labours, and the good he had done, his

answer was, "All is nothing without a Saviour; without him, my best works would condemn me. O! I am ashamed of them, they are so mixed with sin. I have done nothing for God as I ought—O! loss of time sits very heavy upon my spirits. Work, work apace; assure yourselves, nothing will more trouble you when you come to die, than that you have done no more for God, who has done so much for you." He often said, "It is a hard thing for a saint to forgive himself some faults, when God has forgiven them."

Mr. COOPER, when near his end, said, "I saw not my children when they were in the womb; yet there the Lord fed them without my care or knowledge. I shall not see them when I go out of the body, yet shall they not want a father. Death is somewhat dreary, and the streams of that Jordan between us and our Canaan run furiously; but they stand still when the Ark comes."

The Rev. Mr. HALYBURTON, that shining light in St. Andrews, when dying, commended Christ and godliness with great earnestness to

all that came to see him. He exhorted his brethren to diligence in the ministry. "It was the delight of my heart," said he, "to preach the gospel. I desired to decrease, that the Bridegroom might increase, and to be nothing that he might be all. I repent I did not more for him. O that I had the tongues of men and angels to praise Him!" When he was advised to lie quiet, he said, "Whereupon should a man bestow his last breath, but in commending the Lord Jesus Christ; God clothed in our nature, dying for our sins!"

The famous Mr. DURHAM was visited in his last sickness, which was long and lingering, by a minister, who said to him, "Sir, I hope you have set all in order, and that you have nothing else to do but to die." "I bless God," was the answer, "I have not had that to do neither, these many years."

The dying prayer of Rev. ROWLAND NEVAL for his children was, that God's blessing might be the portion of each one of them. He admonished them, "I charge you all, see to it, that you meet me on the right hand of Christ, at the great day." Often, when much spent

with his great labours, he would appeal to God, "That though he might be wearied in his service, he never would be weary of it."

When the Rev. PHILIP HENRY was engaged in the last conflict, his pains were very severe, and he said to his neighbours who came in to see him, "O make sure work for your souls, by getting an interest in Christ while you are in health! If I had that work to do now, what would become of me?" On being asked how he did, he answered, "I find the chips fly off fast, the tree will be down soon." He was sometimes overcome with fainting fits; on recovering from which, he would say, "Dying is but a little more!" Once he said, "Well, I thought I had been putting into the harbour, but I find I must go to sea again."

MATTHEW HENRY's death was somewhat sudden. He said to some friends a short time before he was called home, "You have been used to take notice of the sayings of dying men: this is mine; that a life spent in the service of God, and communion with him, is the most comfortable and pleasant life that any one can live in this world."

Mr. RUTHERFORD said, when he was dying, "I shall shine; I shall see him as he is; I shall see him reign, and all his fair company with him." When exhorting one to be diligent in seeking God, he said, "It is no easy thing to be a Christian; but for me, I have got the victory, and Christ is holding out both his arms to embrace me." He was wonderfully strengthened against the fears of suffering and of death; "for," says he, "I said to the Lord, if he would slay me five thousand times, I would trust in him; and I spake it with much trembling, fearing I should not make my promise good. But as really as he ever spoke to me by his Spirit, he witnessed to me that his grace should be sufficient for me." He said to some ministers who came to see him.—"My Lord and Master is the chief of ten thousand of thousands; none is comparable to him in heaven or on earth. Dear brethren, do all for him; pray for Christ, preach for Christ, feed the flock committed to your charge for Christ, visit and catechise for Christ, do all for Christ, and beware of man-pleasing. Feed the flock out of love: the chief Shepherd will appear shortly. O! that all my brethren did

know what a Master I have served, and what peace I have this day ! I shall sleep in Christ, and when I awake I shall be satisfied with his likeness." Then he said, " This night shall close the door, and put my anchor within the veil. I shall go away in a sleep by five o'clock in the morning ;" which exactly fell out. That night, though he was very weak, he often exclaimed, " O for arms to embrace him ! O for a well-tuned harp." When reminded of his former labour and faithfulness in the work of God, he said, " I disclaim all that ; the port I would be in at is, redemption and forgiveness of sins through his blood."

His last words were, " Glory, glory dwells in Immanuel's land."

The celebrated Mr. BRUCE of Edinburgh, when dying through weakness and old age, being asked by one of his friends, how matters stood now between God and his own soul, answered, " When I was young, I was diligent, and lived by faith in the Son of God ; but now I am old, and not able to do so much ; yet he condescends to feed me daintily."

The morning before he died, he came to breakfast as usual, and whilst seated at the

table, he fell into a deep meditation, and having mused a while, he said, "Hold, daughter, hold, my Master calls me." With these words his sight failed him, whereupon he called for the Bible ; but finding his sight gone, he said, "Find me the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and set my finger on these words, 'I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.' Now," said he, "is my finger upon them?" They told him it was. Then, without any thing further, he said, "Now God be with you, my children; I have breakfasted with you, and I shall sup with the Lord Jesus Christ this night;" and immediately went home.

Mr. HERON, a minister in New England, when dying, and leaving a family of many small children, his poor wife began to weep, and said, "Alas ! what will become of all these children?" He pleasantly replied, "Never fear, he that feeds the young ravens will not

starve the young Herons." And he was not mistaken. It was an ancient observation concerning the English martyrs under the bloody persecution of Mary, "That none of them went more joyfully to the stake, than those who had the greatest families to commit to the Lord."

Rev. JOSEPH ALLEINE, a painful and laborious minister, being deprived of the use of his arms and legs before his death, was asked by a friend, how he could be so well contented to lie so long in that condition? He answered, "What! is God my Father, Jesus Christ my Saviour, and the Holy Spirit my sanctifier and comforter, and shall I not be content without limbs and health? He is an unreasonable wretch, that cannot be content with a God, though he have nothing else." When his people of Taunton came to Dorchester to see him, he was much rejoiced; and having been raised in his bed, he desired them to stand round about him, and whilst a friend held up his hand, he requested them to take it, as they used to do when he had been absent from them. Though very weak, yet he spoke in the following strain: "O! how it rejoices

my heart to see your faces, and to hear your voices, though I cannot speak to you as I once could. Methinks I am now like old Jacob, with all his sons about him. My friends, life is mine—death is mine; in that covenant which I preached to you is all my salvation and all my hope; though my body does not prosper, yet my soul does. I have lived a sweet life by the promises, and I hope through grace can die by a promise.” When they came to take leave of him, he prayed with them as fervently as his weakness permitted, and then said, “Farewell, my dear friends; go home and live over what I have preached to you, and the Lord provide for you when I am gone. Now, I cannot preach to you, but let my wasted strength and useless limbs be a sermon to you; I am afraid of some of you, after all that I have spoken to you. There are many professors, who can pray well and talk well, whom we shall find at last at the left hand of Christ. You have your trades, your estates, your relations; be not taken with these, but with God; O, live on him! For the Lord’s sake, beware of the world, worldly cares, worldly comforts, worldly relations, &c.

O! let not my labours and sufferings—let not my wasted strength and useless limbs rise up in judgment against any of you, at the great day of the Lord.”

Of this eminent saint, it was said by one who knew him, “Each thought was to him a prayer, each prayer a song, each day a Sabbath, each meal a sacrament, and so his life on earth was a foretaste of that eternal repast to which he has now sat down.”*

JOHN WELSH, a minister of the gospel at Ayr, was a holy man, whose power with God in prayer was well known. He used to say, “He wondered how a Christian could lie in bed all night, without rising to spend some of the night in prayer and praise.” In his last illness, he had a great weakness in his knees, caused by his continual kneeling at prayer; the flesh became insensible and hard like horn; but when, in his weakness, he was desired to remit something of his former painfulness, his answer was, he had his life of God, and therefore it should be spent for him. During his sickness, he was so filled with the sensible en-

* The life of this eminently godly man is published by the American Sunday-school Union.

joyment of God, that he was sometimes overheard in prayer to use these words : " Lord, hold thy hand, it is enough ; thy servant is a clay vessel, and can hold no more."

Mr. EDWARD DEERING, a little before his death, said to his friends, " As for my death, I bless God, I feel and find so much inward joy and comfort to my soul, that if it were put to my choice whether I would die or live, I would a thousand times rather choose death than life ; if consistent with the holy will of God."

Some of the last words of ROBERT ROLLOCK were, " Lord, I have hitherto seen but darkly in the glass of thy word ; now grant that I may enjoy the eternal fruition of thy countenance. Haste, Lord, do not tarry ; I am weary both of nights and days. Come, Lord Jesus, that I may come to thee. Break these eye-strings and give me others. O, Lord Jesus, thrust thy hand into my body, and take my soul to thyself. I desire to be dissolved, and to be with thee."

CHAPTER IX.

DEATH WELCOME—THE LAST HOURS OF REV.
HENRY S. RISE, PASTOR OF THE FIRST GER-
MAN REFORMED CHURCH OF CHAMBERSBURG.

WHILST we are often called to mourn under dispensations which to us are mysterious and inscrutable, it is consoling to the Christian to reflect, that the angel, who holds in his hand the sharp sickle, is not commissioned to thrust it in and reap, until the harvest is fully ripe. When we behold a lovely and beloved disciple falling under the stroke of this mighty reaper, we know that he comes to his grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in its season, and we are comforted. Whenever a child of God dies, it is harvest time with him; even though he appear to be cut down while he is green, and cropped in the blossom or the bud; he never dies before he is ripe. God ripens him speedily, when he means speedily to take him home, and he can let in upon that soul

such warm rays and beams of his Spirit, as shall soon mature the seeds of grace into fruits of glory.

No one out of the vast concourse who stood around the grave of the lamented HENRY S. RISE, believed that he had gone home too soon ; all felt assured that he was ripe ; for, whilst living, they had beheld him like a goodly tree laden with all manner of pleasant fruits. We do not mean to say that he was more than human, but though a man, a poor frail man, yet the grace of the Lord Jesus was magnified in him, for he was a good man. He did, emphatically, adorn the doctrine of God his Saviour in life ; and when this is the case, we count it not a strange thing that such a man adorns the same doctrine in death ; a good tree will produce good fruit.

About a year before his death, Mr. Rise was appointed by the Board of Trustees of Marshall College, as their agent to collect funds for the endowment of the professorships of that college in Mercersburg. During the winter of 1836-7, in the prosecution of his agency, he exposed himself to hardships, to which he had not been accustomed, and in consequence of

the excessive fatigue incident to the great exertions which he had made, he was seized with the sickness which terminated his valuable life, May 6, 1837.

It was the happy lot of our lamented friend, after glorifying God, by a life devoted to his service, to be peculiarly favoured in the circumstances of his departure. Could we have led into his chamber every unbelieving and careless soul, whom, during his life, he strove in vain to woo from the ways of sin, and win for Christ, we might have shown him a bright evidence of the *reality* of that religion, whose precepts he practised as well as preached; we would have pointed to those features, pale and emaciated by disease, yet beaming peace, and love, and joy; we would have detained him there, on the verge of heaven, that he might "see how a Christian can die." Throughout his last sickness, (during the whole of which he suffered intensely, without permitting a murmur of complaint, or an expression of impatience to escape his lips,) though with perfect resignation to the will of the Lord, he evinced a readiness either to continue in his Master's

service on earth, or to depart and be with Christ; yet it was evident that he felt anxious to do more for the church below, before he should be called away to the fellowship of the church triumphant. On the afternoon of the day previous to his dissolution, symptoms of an aggravated character manifested themselves, and the approach of death was as unequivocal as though mourning friends had heard the flight of his arrow. On the following morning, he was free from pain, and remarked, with an air of cheerfulness, to a dear friend, who had watched incessantly at his side, "I am well; I feel no pain; my medicine has had the desired effect. See, what a fine moisture is on my skin; the only vestige of my illness is excessive weakness." His friend's eyes filled with tears, and his voice faltered as he said, "Brother Rise, that moisture is THE DAMP OF DEATH."

"Are you serious?" "My dear friend, I am—you have but a few hours to live." "Is it *really* so?" and he paused for a moment in silent prayer. The physician entered: "So, doctor, my case is decided," said the dying

man, extending his hand to him with a sweet smile. His faithful attendant sorrowfully expressed his assent. "Well," was the reply, "it is a just decision : it is a holy decision : it is God's decision ; Father, thy will be done." Then turning his eyes upon his kind physician, with a look that spoke the gratitude of his heart, he thanked him for all the manifestations of his sympathy, and for his unremitting attention ; and with the burning earnestness of a soul ready to wing its way to the throne of the Lamb, he spoke of his own utter nothingness, and the all-sufficiency of Christ : urged his friend to seek an intimacy with the Friend of sinners ; and recommended as the summit of his ambition to live for glory and immortality. "What !" he exclaimed, "should I, poor, miserable sinner, be without my Jesus ! depend upon it, there is a glorious reality in religion. Now," said he, turning to his weeping attendants, "let every one that calls be admitted." It was soon rumoured through the borough that Mr. Rise was dying, and the door of his dwelling was thronged by those who came to bid him farewell, whilst lingering

for a few moments on this side Jordan. The consistory of the church assembled around their dying pastor. It was a solemn hour. He alone retained perfect self-command: all around him were bathed in tears. One by one, as they approached and pressed his cold hand, he addressed them in a tone of voice clear and strong, and with a pungency and adaptedness to the spiritual condition of each, which displayed not only an intimate acquaintance with their individual Christian character, but a compass of thought, and command of language that appeared extraordinary to all who listened to him. He commended his flock to their care: solemnly charged them to be faithful to their trust; and gave to each his parting benediction. He desired that his dying admonition might be communicated to his beloved spiritual charge. "Say to my dear people, Be not discouraged: do not, O! do not disband: be faithful: the Lord will send you one who will be more efficient and useful than I have been: be united in love: live in peace, and the God of peace will be with you. I declare to you in this dying hour, Jesus, whom I preached, to be the foundation and crown of my best hopes: yes,

Jesus, my God, I know his name ;
His name is all my trust ;
Nor will he put my soul to shame,
Nor let my hopes be lost."

He expressed a hope that he should meet his charge together with those whom he formerly served in the gospel, in glory.

Several of his brethren in the ministry came to witness his departure, to testify their sympathy, and to speak encouragement. He meekly admonished them to be faithful to the end : spoke in raptures of his happy lot, and dwelt in ecstasy upon the glories of the upper sanctuary. It was as though, through the chinks and crevices of his fast failing tenement, a brightness from the Eternal Throne was beaming upon his soul. "I am," said he, "on my way to glory : I stand on the verge of Jordan, looking over its banks to Canaan ; the true Joshua beckons to me from the other side : O ! death, where is thy sting ? What is death ?" and he looked upon his Christian friends with an expression of holy serenity, as, with emphasis, he repeated, "What is death ? It is languishing into life eternal ; a few of my dear friends are standing

by my side, whilst I am breathing out my soul ; and this gradual failing of my strength, you call dying." Exhaustion warned him, that soon his voice must be hushed in silence ; and after having spoken a word in season to all around him, he then remembered that there was *one*, to whom he would yet fain bid adieu—his dearest earthly friend : and, for the last fifteen years, the constant partner of his every joy and sorrow. His wife (who, about four weeks subsequent to his death, was laid in the same grave with her beloved husband) was then lying dangerously ill in an adjoining apartment. At his request, she was brought into his room, and placed by his side. After a short interview, during which time all withdrew from the chamber, he blessed his Father for the comfort she had been to him ; recalled with gratitude the sweet spiritual intercourse they had so long enjoyed ; commended her to the widow's God ; admonished her to renewed diligence in the Saviour's service, should she be restored ; and then, without a tear, without betraying the least emotion by the faltering of his voice ; but with a tranquillity serene and

heavenly, he breathed his blessing, and his last farewell !

And now, he waited for the signal to depart. In the intervals between the prayers of his brethren, he spoke of absent friends, to whom he desired to be affectionately remembered ; nor did he forget the institution for which he spent, and was spent. He knew that all connected with it would mourn, and be in bitterness on account of his loss. He thought of the school of the prophets ; and when his eye was covered with the film of darkness, and his voice trembling and faint in the approach of death, he whispered to a friend, " Give my love to the professors, and tell them not to despond." Again his eye brightened, and he distinctly articulated the hymn in which those sweet words occur :

" Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are,
While on his breast I lean my head, -
And breathe my life out sweetly there."

He repeated, " My head is on Jesus' breast : there I breathe my life out sweetly ; O ! how sweetly ! Into thy hands, O Lord, I commit my spirit ; come, Lord Jesus !"

His labouring breath and changing countenance told that the fell destroyer was stamping those loved lineaments as his own. All bowed in solemn prayer. There was a long-drawn sigh—another—and another; and his disimbodyed spirit was in the presence of his Saviour.

CHAPTER X.

“IT IS TOO LATE.”

THE following is a well-substantiated account of the dying hour of one who left this world in despair.

“Within a short distance of the grave of the ever-memorable Jane M^cRea, who was murdered by Indians in the war of the American revolution, was an inn, which for several years was noted proverbially, for the singularity of its exterior painting, its internal accommodations and the facilities afforded at all times to render the amusements of the assembly-room inviting to the youth of the surrounding country. Of course the youth of that family were

well trained to the diversions of the ball, the play, the public show, and all the polite accomplishments of the country dance. Among the inmates of that house was a daughter of singular sprightliness. She was beautiful, gay, full of high life, and fond of amusements. In a season of special revival of religion in the place, during a short period, she was deeply concerned about her soul. But these impressions (resisted as they were by the amusements of home) soon wore away, and left her to her joys. During a year or more, after this, the lively CHLOE 'rejoiced in her youth; her heart cheered her in the days of her youth,' and without molestation, she 'walked in the ways of her heart, and in the sight of her eyes,' perhaps without a thought that God was preparing to bring her to judgment.

"It was on a pleasant afternoon, eighteen or twenty years ago, that the narrator was at the house of one of the members of his church, not far distant from the inn above described, when who should enter the deacon's door, but the lively, lovely Chloe, in all the freshness of a rose in bloom. Her presence uniformly produced a kind of charm, that never failed to

excite the attention of the circle in which she moved. Of course, the deacon's young people were all attention to her, while she did her errand; and as soon as it was done, away she flitted to her home, nimble and sportive, as though earth had no sorrow, and life no end.

“A few days after, very early in the morning, a messenger called at my house in haste, and requested me to make a visit without delay to the house of Mr. E——, (the keeper of the inn above described,) adding, that it was thought Chloe was dying, and she wanted me to come and pray for her. Not having heard of her illness, I was somewhat shocked with the message, and inquired the cause of such an alarm. I was answered, that she had been complaining a day or two past; that there was no alarm when the family retired to rest the evening before; that in the latter part of the night she appeared to be in such distress, that neighbours were called in, who believed her to be dying; that her anxiety to see me was very great, and that it was the wish of the family that I would come immediately and visit her.

“With speed, I hastened to the house of

affliction. On entering the door of the apartment in which the sick lay, she instantly cried out, 'O, Mr. A., do come and pray for my poor soul; I am dying, and I am going to hell! O, do pray for me.'

"Such a salutation was overwhelming. I should judge there were twenty or more persons in the room, nearly all of whom appeared to be deeply affected with the address of the sick to me on my entrance. The disorder of the young woman proved to be a seated mortification, and had thus suddenly risen to a degree of violence beyond the control of medical aid. O, how changed!—how suddenly changed was the condition of this house; this family; this once blooming youth! No enchanting sound of the violin, nor of the dance was heard in the ball-room. No loud prattle, nor laughter from a rabble, *graced* the room of the bar. No courts, nor jurors as umpires between parties in litigation, dignified the spacious sitting-rooms or parlour. No melodious strains were heard from the voice of the enchanting Chloe. But all were in attendance at the bed of disease and horrible anxiety. The family manifested a heart-rending shock

at the change. The attending neighbours realized it with sympathizing and weeping solemnity. And it must not be thought strange that I partook, instantly, a full share of the perturbation, which prevailed in that house of sad reverse. On receiving the above described salutation from the distressed Chloe, I went directly to the bedside. ‘O,’ said she, ‘I am dying, and I am unprepared to die: I am going to hell! O, pray for my poor soul.’

“At first, I had thought of addressing a few words to her with a view to instruct her, and give hints to her mind, which might be to her advantage when I should pray for her. But her anxiety, which was manifested by repeating and reiterating her first salutation, gave no opportunity for a word of instruction, and I concluded to pray with and for her without delay.

“During the season of prayer, she made very little interruption, either by groans, sighs, or struggles. But as soon as the prayer was ended, she recommenced the same affecting and heart-rending outcries as before: ‘O, I am dying unprepared, do pray for me again. I am going to hell: O, I am going to hell, do pray for me again.’

“ My impression was that she needed instruction as well as prayer. I, therefore, presented to her consideration the Lord Jesus as her only helper, and directed her in what manner to look to him and seek his salvation in this case of awful emergency. After listening to the gospel offers of salvation a few moments, she turned to her mother, who sat on the other side of the bed, in constant attendance on her daughter. ‘ O mother,’ said she, ‘ I am dying. Do pray for your dying child. I never heard you pray in my life. Mother, I am going to hell. Do pray for my poor soul.’

“ O, how was my heart affected with this appeal to a mother ! The whole company, apparently, were melted into a burst of feeling, which was manifested by sobbings, and overflowing tears. Death had fixed his relentless grasp on the trembling victim. Before us lay the struggling, agonizing, dying Chloe, inwardly burning to death with the raging fires of inflammation ; her mind excited to the highest degree of anxiety in view of the terrors of approaching death ; while she felt the horrible consciousness of being unprepared for the solemn exchange of worlds. The minister

had prayed, but no relief was found. The mother had been entreated to pray; but, overflowing tears from a soul full of distress and terror, comprised all the assistance she could afford to a child sinking in despair. The attendants were weeping, but none of them could help the dying girl. And, what was very remarkable, she made no attempts to pray for herself, whilst her cries for prayer to save her from hell were incessant. Under such circumstances, I addressed a few words to her in substance as follows:

““ Chloe, you have, evidently, but a short time to live, and it is a matter of the utmost importance you should be prepared to die. Doubtless, it is the anxious desire, and prayer of all present, who know how to pray, that God would have mercy on your soul, prepare you for death, save you from hell, and fit you for heaven. But, there is something which God requires *you* to do. The Lord Jesus Christ has died on the cross to atone for sin, that guilty sinners through faith in his name might be saved from destruction. God requires you now to *believe this truth*, and accept of the righteousness of his atoning

blood as your covering from the guilt of sin. You are convinced that you are a sinner; you fear the wrath of God, and are afraid to die; the Lord Jesus, your only helper, your only Saviour, has opened the door of mercy, and invites you even *now*, on your dying bed, to look to him for salvation. He requires you to repent of your sins, to believe in his name, and seek his pardoning mercy. Resign yourself now into his hands, and Christ is able and ready to pardon your sins and save your soul from death.'

"During these remarks, she listened like one astonished. But, here, I observed a material change in her appearance. She stretched herself in the bed, fixed her eyes on the wall above, and trembled. Still her rational faculties were unimpaired.

"Believing that death was about to cut short his work, I proposed to her the following question. 'CHLOE, will you now accept of the Lord Jesus Christ as your only Saviour from sin and from hell, and submit your soul into his hands for salvation?' With a faltering voice she answered, '*No, I cannot!*' Astonished at the answer, I rejoined once more by inquiry,

‘Why, are you not willing, and why *can* you not now with your dying breath accept of Christ for salvation?’

“With evident appearance of being in full possession of her rational powers, but with a still more feeble and tremulous articulation, looking me full in the face, she answered, ‘IT IS TOO LATE!’

“These were her dying words; not another word was spoken to her. Not another syllable did she attempt to utter. She shuddered, groaned, gasped, ceased to breathe; and the immortal spirit took its flight in less than two hours after I first entered the room. I closed her eyes in death, amid the outcries of almost frantic relatives, and the sobbings of a deeply affected circle of attendants.

“The parents of the deceased requested me to attend the funeral at their house, and preach on the occasion. I promised compliance with their request, and asked permission to state to the audience at the funeral, the manner of CHLOE’s death, with a view to improve the circumstances as a solemn warning to the young, and to all impenitent sinners, to prepare to meet their God. This request was granted

without hesitation. On the funeral occasion a vast concourse assembled ; and, at the conclusion of a sermon, listened to the recital of the substance of the foregoing statement of facts, accompanied with an improvement of the alarming death ; after which, the remains of the poor girl were laid in the dust."

Reader, *it is not too late* now, if you are willing to consecrate yourself to God, and accept the Saviour as your portion. And now, before you close this little book, remember, that whilst you continue to resist the strivings of the Holy Spirit, and to reject the mercy so freely offered you by the blessed Jesus, the probability is hourly increasing that you will cry for mercy when "*it is too late.*"

THE END.

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